025100

TICKETS

written by John Hughes

TICKETS PDA 7/26/96 JWH

EXT. BANK. TIME/TEMP SIGN

11 degrees at 9:09. Beyond the sign, an elevated train CROSSES FRAME.

EXT. CHICAGO. NORTHSIDE. NIGHT

A cold, damp, winter's night on the Northside of Chicago.

EXT. STREET. CLUB MARQUEE

Block letters on a lighted white background.

FINAL NIGHT - LAST SHOW - IT'S BEEN NICE

CU. TICKET WINDOW

A handwritten sign taped to the inside of the glass:

BOX OFFICE OPEN 9:00 AM

EXT. STREET. CLUB

A union auditorium built in the twenties, abandoned in the fifties, revived in the eighties as a live music venue. The distant CLATTER of an elevated train is heard. TOM BROOKES ENTERS FRAME carrying a sleeping bag, an aluminum frame chaise lounge, and a Lunchmate cooler. He's 30 years old, of medium build with a simple, sincere face. He's wearing an old IDOT parka, nylon snow pants, snow boots, battery-heated mittens, and an old sheepskin flyer's hat. A scarf is tied around his face. He sets his belongings on the sidewalk a few feet from the ticket office. He unfolds his chaise, lays the sleeping bag over it, and positions his cooler beside it. He unzips the sleeping bag and lowers himself onto the chaise. He zips himself into the bag to his waist, clumsily removes a Discman from his parka pocket, and tries, in vain, to press the play button with his mittened thumb. He wedges the mitten between his knees and pulls it off. He presses the button with his bare thumb. His MUSIC STARTS. He zips the bag over head. The chaise collapses.

EXT. DOUGHNUT SHOP

A bedraggled, orange, crushed-velvet recliner chair is parked outside the door of a franchise doughnut shop. A rusty, metal tool box is chained and padlocked to the chair and the chair is chained and locked to a bike rack. The SCREECH of elevated train brakes is heard.

CU. HOT WATER BOTTLE

A red, rubber, hot water bottle is being filled with coffee.

INT. DOUGHNUT SHOP. CUSTOMER

A diminutive customer, LESLIE HAYES, waits at the counter. She's wearing black galoshes, over-sized, safety-orange nylon over-trousers under a heavy, second-hand, red, felt holiday-themed skirt with sequined reindeer, and an enormous, navy blue wool peacoat. The coat arms swing free. Leslie's arms are inside the coat. Her head is hidden beneath a yellow stocking cap and a green, down-filled hood from a ski jacket. Several wool scarves are wound around her neck and face. She's wearing safety goggles over wire-rim glasses. A headband flashlight is stretched over the hood.

INT. DOUGHNUT SHOP. CU. OWNER/OPERATOR

A listless, heavy-set, middle-aged OWNER/OPERATOR dressed in a dingy white shirt and a sweater vest dappled with flour and sugar crystals, is filling the hot water bottle.

OWNER/OPERATOR
Cream or sugar?

CU. LESLIE

Her eyes sparkle with good humor.

LESLIE
Cream, please, and a plain doughnut.

She looks down.

CU. LESLIE'S CROTCH

Furious finger motion as the skirt is gathered in from behind and lifted to reveal Leslie's hands poking out of the open fly of her nylon trousers. One hand holds the skirt up and the other slides a folded five dollar bill across the counter.

EXT. EL STATION. STAIRS

Two 17 year-old suburban boys, ASA MARWICK, and OMAR AUGUSTINE lumber down the steps from the platform above. They're wearing one-piece ski suits. Asa's carrying a small kettle-style barbecue and a bag of briquettes. Omar is carrying a grocery bag and a portable stereo. They're both wearing backpacks. Asa is soft, boyish, shy. He is fair with fine and delicate features. Omar is athletic, strong, and confident. He's taller, broader, and darker than Asa.

ASA
(cautiously)
Do you think this is
a good idea?

Omar answers with a stare.

ASA
I mean, is there a chance we
could get killed?

OMAR
(brave)
There's always that risk.

Asa nods. He didn't get the reassurance he was seeking. Omar acknowledges Asa's anxiety with cold comfort.

OMAR
(pause)
But shit, it could happen
anywhere.
(dramatic pause)
Danger is omnipresent.
(continues)
You're just reacting to negative
imagery. In Winnetka, violence
wears a suit and tie. In the
city it runs around naked.
(long pause)
Everything can't be nice.
Sometimes you have to suffer, if
you want something bad enough.

The boys reach the bottom of the stairs and continue down the sidewalk of a commercial side street.

ASA
I'm not sure getting shot or
freezing to death is worth a
free concert ticket.

OMAR
Tonight isn't about tickets.
It's about meeting people.
Tickets are the raison d'etre
for a social experience.

Asa nods apprehensively.

OMAR
Aren't you just a little tired of suburban weekends? Suburban girls? Aren't you bored with them? Wouldn't you like to try a city girl? Wouldn't a change of attitude be refreshing? To ask, for once, rather than having to beg?

Asa doesn't understand.

OMAR
I'm not talking about Gold Coast, brownstone, private school girls. I'm talking about neighborhood girls. You know? Father's a fireman, brother's in jail, pierced nipples, neck tattoos. A year of city college. Carries a condom in her Marlboro box. Needy. That doesn't interest you?

ASA
No.
(pause)
I'm not interested in sex with a generalization.

EXT. CLUB

Tom angrily repositions his chaise. He tests it before carefully lowering himself onto it. He wiggles side-to-side. It holds. He bounces up and down. It holds. He takes out his Discman again, presses the PLAY BUTTON. MUSIC COMES UP. He lays back and the rear support collapses. The chaise flips over backwards.

EXT. STREET. CROSSWALK

A COLLEGE BOY and a COLLEGE GIRL wait on a traffic light. He's wearing a Northwestern University cap, sufficiently dirty and worn with loose threads hanging from the bill like fringe. She's wearing a beret and a leather pimp coat. A refrigerator box slides INTO FRAME and waits behind them. College Girl turns and looks nervously over her shoulder.

HER POV

The refrigerator box.

CU. COLLEGE GIRL

Puzzled, a little nervous. A long beat and she looks away.

CU. REFRIGERATOR

An eye-level flap opens.

CU. COLLEGE GIRL

She looks back again.

CU. REFRIGERATOR BOX

The flap snaps shut.

EXT. CLUB. WIDE

Tom is gone. His chaise is laying in a collapsed heap on tne ground. A middle-aged ex-flower child, MR. 66, shuffles THROUGH FRAME. He's tall and gaunt, drawn and pale, old beyond his years. His graying, fawn hair spills over his shoulders in dirty, twisted curls. He wears a thick mustache dappled with gray. A necklace with three turquoise beads hangs from his neck. He's wearing black jeans tucked into mid-calf black boots, a faded flannel shirt over soiled thermals, an old, naval officer's coat, and a crumpled, black cowboy hat with a band made from a weathered strip of American flag. Mr. 66 walks back INTO FRAME.

CU. MR. 66

He strokes his greasy mustache as he looks over Tom's things.

HIS POV

Tom's cooler.

EXT. STREET. CROSSWALK

Leslie is sitting in her chair, waiting for the traffic light to change. A well-heeled GEEK and his GIRLFRIEND, both in their late twenties, step up beside Leslie and give her an amused once-over. The Geek is small, wiry, and colorless. He's wearing a white, ribbed turtle neck, a colorless, electric blue jacket under a black leather coat. His hair is long, curly and Brit-cute. His Girlfriend is taller and more substantial. She's in a mid-seventies-Chelsea Hotel mood. Leslie turns the upper half of her body towards the couple and bends back to look up at them.

GEEK
You look warm and comfortable.

LESLIE
Thank you.

GEEK'S GIRLFRIEND
What's with the chair?

Leslie stares for a moment. She looks at her chair.

LESLIE
It's a chair.

GEEK
Are you waiting for the traffic light?

LESLIE
Yes.

GEEK
When it's green you'll push your chair across the street?

LESLIE
Yes.

GEEK
You always have a place to sit.

LESLIE
(sarcastic)
Ain't it the truth.

GEEK'S GIRLFRIEND
Is there anything you own that you're not wearing?

LESLIE
My cat.

EXT. CLUB

Mr. 66 is on the chaise lounge, warm and cozy inside the sleeping bag. He's eating Tom's sandwich and drinking his Mountain Dew. The Refrigerator Box is parked beside him. Mr. 66 looks up at it as he chews.

MR. 66
Howdy.

HIS POV

The Box turns to him. It tilts forward. The flap opens.

CU. MR. 66

A throaty laugh.

EXT. CLUB

Leslie pushes her chair INTO FRAME, parking next to the Box. Mr. 66 leans around the Box and greets Leslie with a friendly grin and a wave of his Dew.

MR. 66
Evening.

LESLIE
Hi.
(to the box)
Hello.

The Box turns to her.

MR. 66
(to Leslie)
I don't think it's a talker.

Leslie reaches her hand out of her trouser fly and lifts the toolbox off the chair. Mr. 66 and the Box watch her. Leslie sits down. She pulls her hand into her trousers and settles into the chair with a sigh. The Box turns to Mr. 66. He looks up at the Box.

HIS POV. UP ANGLE

The flap opens.

BOX' POV

Through the open flap. Mr. 66 shrugs.

CU. MR. 66

Has another bite, grins, shrugs.

CU. BOX

A long pause and it turns away.

EXT. ALLEY. TOM

He's rummaging through the overflow from a filled dumpster, carefully avoiding the fresh garbage. He finds a vegetable crate, smells it -- it reeks -- he rejects it and continues his search.

EXT. CLUB

Asa and Omar arrive and unload their gear next to Leslie. She watches them. The Box turns to face them.

OMAR
What's up?

LESLIE
Stock market.

The remark is a little too glib, a little too soon. Omar dismisses it in the spirit it was offered.

OMAR
Whatever.

He and Asa continue to make camp. Asa gives Leslie a nervous wave. She just stares. He sheepishly turns away.

CU. BOX

Mr. 66 leans around the Box and grins.

MR. 66
Welcome, brothers.

CU. ASA AND OMAR

Asa is startled. He flinches. Omar leans away..

CU. MR. 66

He lofts his Dew.

CU. ASA AND OMAR

Asa offers a polite but anxious smile. Omar is guarded.

ASA
Hi.

CU. MR. 66

He studies Omar and Asa.

MR. 66
Sharp suits. You guys space rangers?

EXT. CLUB

Asa and Omar ignore Mr. 66. Leslie watches with a sly grin. The Box watches. Asa takes a metallic survival blanket out of his back pack.

MR. 66
Excuse me.

The boys continue to ignore Mr. 66. Omar removes an aerosol canister and a folded air mattress. He hands it to Asa.

OMAR
You want to deal with this?

ASA
(glad to be busy)
Sure.

MR. 66
Hello?

Omar and Asa continue to ignore Mr. 66.

MR. 66
(irritated)
Pardon me, but I asked you kittens a question.

CU. ASA AND OMAR

Asa turns his back to the others and whispers to Omar.

ASA
Did he call us kittens?

OMAR
Yes. We're going to have to say something. He's getting pissed.

ASA
Go ahead.

Omar looks around Asa.

HIS POV

Leslie, the Box, and Mr. 66 are all looking at him, waiting for an answer.

EXT. CLUB

Asa steps around behind Omar. Omar puts on his friendliest face.

OMAR
(to Mr. 66)
No.

MR. 66
No, what?

OMAR
No, we're not space rangers.

MR. 66
You look like space rangers, man.

CU. ASA AND OMAR

They have a quick, private exchange.

ASA
He's the scariest-looking person I've ever seen in person.

OMAR
He's blasted.

ASA
You think maybe we should take-off?

EXT. STREET. ALLEY ENTRANCE. TOM

He comes around the corner from the alley with a cinder block and a pair of empty paint cans. He stops cold.

HIS POV

Omar and Asa are gathering up their gear. Mr. 66 is barking at them.

MR. 66
Come here!

CU. TOM

He's furious.

TOM
Shit!

CU. MR. 66

He's glaring at the boys.

MR. 66
Don't regard me as a piece of shit.

CU. ASA AND OMAR

Asa shakes his head, no. Omar draws in a nervous breath.

OMAR
Sir? We would never regard you as a piece of shit. We were simply busy setting up our things.

EXT. CLUB

Asa holds up the barbecue. He tries to appease 66.

ASA
We're going to have a barbecue for everybody.

LESLIE
You have to have a license to cook on the street.

Asa hands the barbecue to Omar.

MR. 66
(appeased)
What are you gonna make?

OMAR
Hot dogs.

MR. 66
You got any beer?

OMAR
No, we don't. Sorry.

MR. 66
Weenies without beer?

Asa nods. He looks at Omar for a moment.

ASA
(to Mr. 66)
Well put, sir. That's exactly what we are.

Leslie laughs.

CU. MR. 66

He lets out a deep, raspy laugh. He takes a bite of the sandwich and looks up.

HIS POV

Tom is standing over him.

CU. MR. 66

Chewing. He winks.

MR. 66
Evening, brother.

CU. TOM. UP ANGLE

Tom howls.

TOM
(to Mr. 66)
Get out of my chair!

CU. MR. 66. DOWN ANGLE

Looking up. He's timid and cowed. He quickly swallows.

MR. 66
The chair was here, man. Nobody was around.

EXT. CLUB

Mr. 66 hangs the remaining portion of his sandwich from his mouth, unzips the sleeping bag, and sits up.

TOM
Goddamn thief! You ate my sandwich!

ASA
(fearfully)
Oh, Jesus.

MR. 66
Take it easy, man. The space rangers are gonna do some wieners, you'll be fine.

TOM
Get your stinking, drunk, dirty ass off my chair! NOW!

Mr. 66 is offended. He glares at Tom but still rises.

MR. 66
You know what, man? What goes around, comes around.

Tom whips the sleeping bag off the chair.

TOM
(to himself)
Goddamn it.

MR. 66
You know what the Bible says about charity, man?

TOM
Go for a walk.

MR. 66
You're some kind of fine Christian man.
(angry pause)
I was in Southeast Asia. You know what I mean?

TOM
Yeah, yeah.

MR. 66
If I wasn't sick, I'd bust your head.

LESLIE
Excuse me.

MR. 66
Don't you start with me, Junior. Sick or not, I can break <u>your</u> balls.

LESLIE
I was addressing the new guy.

TOM
(indignant)
Me? New guy? I was here half an hour ago.

LESLIE
Like that means anything?

TOM
This is going to be a long night.

LESLIE
You know what? This guy sees an empty chair, he sees food and pop...

TOM
And he steals it.

LESLIE
It's not your wife and kids, man, it's a sandwich and a can of Coke.

ASA
(impulsively)
It's a Mountain Dew.

TOM
This is my food, my drink, my chair, my sleeping bag. That incoherent liquor monkey hasn't taken a bath since Jimi Hendrix died. He's caked with filth, he shits himself...

MR. 66
Excuse me, brother, I do not shit myself. I don't work at the bank, I don't got a sail boat or a Lincoln Continental but that doesn't mean I don't have enough self-respect to find a fuckin' toilet.

TOM
Why don't you take some of that self-respect and go find a comb and a toothbrush?

Tom turns the sleeping bag inside-out and redresses the chaise. He looks at the others. They're all staring at him.

TOM
Don't give me the appalled look. I'm here to get some tickets. Not do charity work. You leave me alone, I leave you alone.

He puts in his ear buds and hits the PLAY button on his Discman.

TOM
Goodnight.

He zips himself into the bag. The chaise collapses.

EXT. STREET. LATER

A black Lexus cuts out of traffic and pulls into the parking lane. It STOPS IN CLOSE-UP.

INT. LEXUS

The driver is a diminutive, chinless geek in excessively expensive, retro designer clothes. He has a goatee and short hair carefully combed forward. His name is MAX CEDRIC. His girlfriend, WALLIS CHAMBERS, is 6" taller, very beautiful, with a pierced eyebrow, baby doll make-up, overly cute designer clothes, and TV hair. Max is finishing a phone call. Wallis looks out the window.

MAX
I have it coming in from Columbia on Wednesday. You know David Forsberg? Yeah. He runs an emerging markets fund.

WALLIS' POV

Tom's angrily fixing his chaise. Asa and Omar are unpacking their gear. Leslie's in her chair laughing at Tom. The Box is stationary. Mr. 66 is lighting a cigarette butt, offering unwanted advice to Tom. Tom waves him off. Mr. 66 turns and spots the car.

MAX OC
He brings it up on the company plane.

EXT. LEXUS. PASSENGER WINDOW

Smoked glass. Mr. 66's reflection appears and grows as he steps up to the car and leans in close to the window.

CU. MR. 66

He looks at his reflection and checks his face as if the window were a mirror.

CU. WALLIS

She turns away in disgust. Out the window, we see Mr. 66 open his mouth and examine his tongue.

INT. CAR

Wallis gives Max an impatient look. Mr. 66 examines his teeth.

WALLIS
Can we go before he starts checking his hemorrhoids?

CU. MAX

He looks to Wallis, notices Mr. 66, and wraps up the call.

MAX
Shit. Mickey? I gotta go. I'll have my office send the coffee over on Thursday. You'll love it. Adios.

He hangs up the phone.

MAX
Jesus Christ.

EXT. STREET. LEXUS

Max gets out of the car.

MAX
Excuse me? You want to stay clear of the car?

HIS POV

Mr. 66 rises and looks across the Lexus roof.

MR. 66
(apologetic)
Didn't touch it, boss.

INT. CAR

Wallis winces and looks away as Mr. 66's coat falls open and the broken fly on his filthy trousers is clearly visible in the window.

CU. LESLIE

She's amused.

CU. TOM

He looks over his shoulder.

HIS POV

Max moves around to the front of the car.

MAX
It's going to be alarmed.

Mr. 66 steps back from the car as Max approaches. He addresses Mr. 66 as if he were a child.

MAX
We don't want any trouble tonight.

He opens the door for Wallis. She slips out and squeezes around the door, careful not to brush Mr. 66. Max quickly closes the door.

CU. TOM

He watches carefully.

CU. ASA AND OMAR

They're relieved that Mr. 66 is being put in his place. Their concern has disappeared.

OMAR
Is smoked glass an option on a Lexus?

Asa shrugs.

EXT. STREET

Wallis holds Max's arm. He activates the security system. It CHIRPS.

MAX
The alarm is on.

CU. LESLIE

She cups her hands around her mouth to filter her voice in a mockery of Max's serious tone.

LESLIE
The alarm is on. I repeat. The alarm is on.

CU. MAX

A cold stare.

CU. TOM

A hint of a grin.

EXT. STREET. DOWN ANGLE

A NO PARKING SIGN in front of the Lexus. Max escorts Wallis around the front of the car and into the street.

CU. MR. 66

He waves to the couple.

MR. 66
Enjoy your dinner.

EXT. ACROSS THE STREET. ITALIAN RESTAURANT.

A small, down-chic restaurant in a store front. It is an obvious and very twee replica of a neighborhood Italian restaurant -- Mama Imbroglio. Max and Wallis, approach. Max opens the door for Wallis. She enters. He hesitates, looking across the street with contempt.

EXT. BANK CLOCK. LATER

Time is 9:47. Temperature is 8 degrees.

CU. MR. 66

He uses a long, dirty fingernail to clean a spilled dab of mustard off his vest. He sucks the nail clean and looks up with a grin.

CU. ASA

He's been watching Mr. 66. He quickly turns away.

EXT. CLUB. NEWSPAPER BOX

Mr. 66 has parked himself on top of the box.

EXT. CLUB. WIDE

Asa and Omar unload their backpacks -- a camp stove, lantern, space-age blankets, toiletries, music. Tom has braced his chaise with the cement blocks and paint cans and is zipped into his bag. Leslie's reading a book in the light of her flashlight headband.

CU. ASA

He sneaks a look at Mr. 66.

CU. MR. 66

Staring with a hungry look.

CU. ASA

He looks away.

EXT. CLUB. MAIL BOX

Mr. 66 slides down off the box.

MR. 66
My name's 66. Mr. 66 to you younguns. Real name's Joe Kirby. Everybody calls me 66 because...that was my year.

He holds out his right hand.

EXT. CLUB. ASA AND OMAR

They look up at the outstretched hand in horror.

ASA
I would shake your hand but I have a cold.

CU. MR. 66

He shrugs it off.

MR. 66
It's okay. I got one too.

EXT. CLUB

Omar slips on his mitten and shakes Mr. 66's hand.

OMAR
It's a pleasure, sir.

MR. 66
What's your name, darlin'?

OMAR
(taken aback)
Chuck.

MR. 66
You wouldn't be lyin' to old Santy Claus, would you?

OMAR
Nope.

MR. 66
Betcha are.

He tries to pull his hand away. Mr. 66 holds tight.

OMAR
Asa?

MR. 66
Asa?

ASA
I can't get my glove on.

MR. 66
Asa, sweetheart, what's Chuck's real name?

CU. ASA

He's afraid to lie. He looks to Omar for help.

CU. MR. 66

He watches the exchange of looks between Asa and Omar with a sneaky smile.

CU. OMAR

He confesses.

OMAR
My real name is Omar.

CU. MR. 66

He holds the sneaky smile for a moment.

MR. 66
Omar?

CU. OMAR

He nods.

CU. ASA

He's desperate to occupy himself. He fumbles with the folded mattress.

ASA
Is it going bother anybody if I inflate my mattress?

CU. LESLIE

She looks up from her book.

LESLIE
Do you have to take your pants off to do it?

CU. ASA

He smiles.

ASA
No. It's a camp mattress.

CU. LESLIE

She returns to her reading.

LESLIE
Go ahead.

CU. MR. 66 AND OMAR

Mr. 66 lets out a sharp but brief laugh. He turns his attention back to Omar.

MR. 66
Omar? You've got some cute eyes.

OMAR
(gripped with fear)
Thank you.

MR. 66
Where'd you get the fancy name?

OMAR
My mother's Persian.

MR. 66
Ooo. I like that. Pretty?

OMAR
(to discourage him)
She's old.

MR. 66
How old?

OMAR
Asa?

CU. ASA

Struggling with the aerosol inflation can.

ASA
In a second.

CU. MR. 66

He nods his approval.

MR. 66
40? That's a nice vintage.

CU. OMAR

A sickly smile.

CU. MR. 66

He laughs.

MR. 66
I'm kidding you, George.

He lets go of Omar's hand.

MR. 66
(to Asa)
Come up here and shake my hand,
Pucker Butt.

CU. ASA

He looks up from his busy-work.

EXT. CLUB

Omar backs away. Asa rises. He slips on his mitten and steps forward offering a reluctant hand. Mr. 66 takes it.

MR. 66
You got some money on you?

ASA
Yes.

He pulls Asa close.

MR. 66
Can I have a little bit?

ASA
Yes.

MR. 66
Not now.

ASA
Okay.

MR. 66
I'll let you know.

ASA
Thank you.

MR. 66
You're very welcome.

INT. BOX

The flap is open. Mr. 66's back is to CAMERA.

EXT. CLUB

Asa tries to back away. Mr. 66 pulls him back and wraps his arm around his shoulder.

MR. 66
You ever been to Georgia in the springtime?

ASA
No, sir, I haven't.

MR. 66
It's real fine.

ASA
I would imagine so.

MR. 66
It's lovely.

Asa turns away from the gush of liquor breath.

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ASA
Uh, huh.

MR. 66
You like peaches?

ASA
Occasionally.

MR. 66
Best peaches in the world come from Georgia. You ever heard the term 'juicy as a Georgia peach'?

ASA
No.

MR. 66
You ever heard the term 'soft as the fuzz on a peach'?

ASA
That rings a bell.

MR. 66
You ever look at a peach real close?

ASA
Not recently.

MR. 66
Got them two halves with that little cleft running between them.

ASA
You know what, sir?

MR. 66
(angrily)
Don't call me, sir, man. I'm not your gym teacher.
(calms down)
Call me by my name or call me Daddy.

ASA
(worried)
Daddy?

MR. 66
Don't you want to be my baby boy?

CU. LESLIE

As she watches Asa and Mr. 66., she slides her arms into her jacket sleeves and sits up in her chair.

EXT. CLUB

Asa looks to Omar for rescue. Omar doesn't respond. Asa looks back to Mr. 66.

ASA
I should really get into starting the barbecue. Wouldn't a grilled hot dog sound nice right about now or maybe in a little while?

MR. 66
With a nice peach for dessert?

ASA
Peaches are actually a little bit out of season. We have some Oreos.

MR. 66
Ooo. I like them.

ASA
We got 'em. Lots.

MR. 66
Can I tell you something, Peachy?

ASA
Peachy?

MR. 66
I'm going to call you Peachy. And you're going to call me...?

ASA
(can't remember his name)
Mr. Hippie. Mr....

MR. 66
You're going to call me Daddy. Your buddy with the cute eyes can call me Mr. 66.

ASA
That's it. Mr. 66. I'll call you Mr. 66.

MR. 66
That's what George calls me. You call me Daddy.
(to Omar)
George? Your nickname's going to be Little Sister.

CU. TOM

He's listening to the conversation with a smirk, enjoying the suffering he believes they brought upon themselves.

CU. LESLIE

She leans forward in her chair. She's heard enough.

LESLIE
Hey, man? You know what? Stop. I defended you a minute ago. Do me a favor and give this up.

CU. MR. 66

He smiles at Leslie.

MR. 66
How old are you, little puss?

CU. LESLIE

She's not going to let him rise on her.

LESLIE
It's irrelevant. Stop the shit and relax.

CU. MR. 66

He stares at Asa.

CU. ASA

He's waiting anxiously to see if Leslie's appeal worked.

CU. MR. 66'S HAND

He lets go of Asa's hand.

EXT. CLUB

Asa steps back. Mr. 66 lets him go.

MR. 66
(to Leslie)
I saw more shit by the time I was your age than you'll see your whole life. Serious shit. Dyin' shit.

LESLIE
That means you can give them shit because you got shit?

MR. 66
That was nothing. That was just talk.

TOM
Excuse me. You're engaging in conversation with a bar sponge.

MR. 66
(to Leslie)
You're about 14.

LESLIE
Not even close and I know what you're trying to do. Let's close the conversation before we're not friends anymore.

MR. 66
I'm old enough to be your Daddy.

LESLIE
Why don't you be passive for awhile?

MR. 66
If you were my daughter, I'd kick your ass for talking down to me like this.

LESLIE
It's a good thing you don't have kids.

MR. 66
I got kids. I got lots of kids, man. I got kids older than you.

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TOM
(to Leslie)
What's your name?

LESLIE
Leslie.

TOM
Leslie, stop talking to Joe.
(to Mr. 66)
Joe? Get lost. I'm real serious.
This is not fun anymore.

MR. 66
How old are you?

TOM
I'm older than her and I'm younger than you and you're not my Daddy, you're not any of our Daddies. Peachy? Give him a couple bucks.

ASA
You got it.

He quickly whips off the glove, unzips his suit.

MR. 66
I love that sound. Hurt me a little more.

Asa yanks a ten out of his wallet. He holds it out for Mr. 66. He tricks Asa by grabbing his bare wrist with one hand and swiping the bill with the other.

MR. 66
Ouch!

He laughs.

MR. 66
Thank you, my brothers and sister. Thank you thing in the Box. God bless. Peace.

He walks away. Asa is amazed. He breathes a sigh of relief.

OMAR
Whoa.

ASA
He scared the SHIT outta me.
(to Leslie)
Thank you very much. We did NOT expect to run into anything like that. I mean, man, I thought that guy was going to like, make me his wife or something.

LESLIE
What did you expect to find out here at night?

ASA
Not that.

LESLIE
Did you think about it?

ASA
Coming in on the train, we discussed it but we weren't even close.

OMAR
You discussed it.

LESLIE
You got many guys like him up there in the suburbs?

ASA
No.

LESLIE
I didn't think so.

OMAR
Can I ask a dumb question?

LESLIE
Because I can't afford anything else.

Asa inserts the aerosol can nozzle into the air mattress and with a BANG! and series of RAPID SNAPS, the plastic mattress unfolds and inflates.

EXT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT

CAMERA MOVES IN on the restaurant to a foursome at a window table. Max and Wallis with the couple we saw earlier, the Geek and his Girlfriend. The men are having a spirited conversation. The women are being ornamental. They're mid-way through their starters.

INT. RESTAURANT

Max speaks vigorously with a mouthful of porchini mushroom. He uses his fork to gesture. The Geek is hunched over a glob of polenta. The Geek's Girlfriend struggles with her mussels. Wallis has a salad.

MAX
This guy is, like, "huh?" and I'm like, "whatever", right? I mean, I'm not paying three hundred grand for his little piece of shit postal worker house.

Max helps himself, uninvited, to one of the Geek's Girlfriend's mussels.

GEEK'S GIRLFRIEND
They rot.

MAX
Ask yourself this -- how does a working class guy know that his house is worth three hundred grand?
(to Geek's Girlfriend)
Overcooked.
(continues)
If every moron on the Northside gets wired into actual real value, there won't be a decent deal left.

CU. BARBECUE GRILL

The coals are glowing.

EXT. CLUB. ASA AND OMAR

They're huddled over the grill, talking in low tones.

OMAR
I think she might be hot.

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ASA
Who?

OMAR
Leslie

ASA
Seriously? How?

He looks over his shoulder.

HIS POV

Leslie is barely visible inside her enormous coverings. There wouldn't be any possible way to make a judgment on her physique.

CU. ASA

He turns back puzzled.

ASA
She looks like the dirty rag heap at the car wash.

CU. OMAR

A sneaky grin.

OMAR
She's got some cute eyes.

CU. ASA

He stares at Asa.

ASA
According to the old hippie guy, so do you. What's that mean?

CU. ASA AND OMAR

Asa sets the grill over the coals.

OMAR
It's all in the eyes. Trust me.

ASA
My aunt has cute eyes and she's a barge.

OMAR
You know what else I think? I think whoever's in the box is a woman.

ASA
Why?

OMAR
I just have a feeling.

ASA
You don't know anything about it except it's a General Electric with an ice-maker.

EXT. CLUB. TOM

He's listening to his MUSIC, staring up at the sky.

CU. BOX

A flap cut in the box at eye level slowly opens.

CU. LESLIE

She rocks forward and sits up. She bends over, fidgets with her fly...

CU. TOM

He shuts off his Discman and removes the CD. We HEAR THE SOUND OF TRICKLING FLUID. He leans forward and looks beyond the box. He's puzzled.

CU. ASA

He rises up.

ASA
Oh, God.

CU. OMAR. FROM BEHIND

He looks over his shoulder. He's dumbfounded.

HIS POV

Leslie's pouring herself a cup of coffee. The motions necessary to uncork the water bottle and direct the flow into the cup, hidden beneath the skirt looks like something very much different.

CU. TOM

He shakes his head in disgust.

TOM
Long fuckin' night.

CU. ASA

He turns back to Omar.

ASA
Still think she's hot?

CU. OMAR

He's stupefied.

OMAR
Is she a guy?

CU. BOX

It turns slowly to face Leslie.

CU. LESLIE

She caps the bottle, puts it back, retracts her arms, works them up into her jacket and out the arms, frees her hands, takes a waxed paper bag out of her pocket, removes a doughnut, picks up the cup of coffee, dunks the doughnut and takes a bite.

CU. OMAR

He slams his eyes shut.

CU. BOX

The flap snaps shut.

CU. TOM

He lays back on the chaise and shakes his head in disgust.

CU. ASA

He looks at his watch.

CU. LESLIE

She looks to the Box. To Asa and Omar, leans forward to look at Tom.

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LESLIE
It's coffee.

EXT. CLUB

Omar relaxes. Asa opens his eyes. Leslie takes a sip and spits out a fine line. Omar looks down at the steaming tan fluid on the pavement. Tom leans forward for a confirming view. Asa rises up and looks. He's relieved.

LESLIE
I only have my cup and I don't share stuff that touches my lips. But you're welcome to some if you want.

TOM
I'll pass.

OMAR
No, thanks.

ASA
Did you or did you not serve yourself out of your pants?

LESLIE
I did.

ASA
Why?

LESLIE
Because it's in a hot water bottle and it's by my stomach and I don't want to take it out because it'll get cold and it'll taste shitty and it won't serve me as a heater.

Omar walks back to his mattress and sits down.

LESLIE
(to Omar)
Just so you know, I'm fully dressed under all this shit.
(to the group)
Nobody wants any?

CU. BOX. PAVEMENT

A flap at the bottom of the box opens and a metal thermos lid slides out.

EXT. CLUB. LATER

A police squad pulls up to the curb.

EXT. POLICE CAR

A middle-aged COP looks out of the passenger window.

COP
You kids got ID?

CU. ASA AND OMAR

Asa's holding a red, plastic cup filled with hot coffee to his lips. Omar instinctively rests his gloved hand on his cheek to hide his youth.

ASA
We're going to jail.

OMAR
Look old.

CU. LESLIE

She slips her arms into her sleeves.

CU. TOM

He sits forward with a groan.

TOM
Christ.
(to the others)
Do you idiots have ID?
(to the Cop)
Just a second.

CU. COP

He nods.

CU. OMAR AND ASA

They look at Tom and shake their heads, no.

OMAR
We weren't planning on drinking.

CU. TOM

He expected as much.

TOM
So I have to cover for you.
Thanks.

CU. TOM

He makes an extreme effort to make it look as though he's searching for his wallet.

TOM
Lotta clothes. It's cold
tonight.

CU. COP

He nods again.

COP
You're not cooking on that thing
are you?

CU. ASA

He shakes his head, no.

CU. COP

He looks at the Box.

COP
What's in the box?

CU. TOM

He looks down the line to the Box.

TOM
A guy went over to the doughnut
shop to use the bathroom. He
sits in there to keep out of the
wind.

CU. COP

He buys the explanation.

COP
You're waiting in line for the
farewell show?

Looks up at the marquee.

COP
Freebies?

CU. TOM

He grins and nods.

TOM
Can't beat the price. I'm sorry this is taking so long. I'm wearing a lot of layers. Hold on.
(to Leslie)
I'll cover you.
(gestures to Omar and Asa)
You cover them.
(to the Cop)
Got it.

EXT. CLUB

Tom crosses to the squad car. He removes his driver's license from his wallet and hands it in the window.

CU. LESLIE

She slips her hand into her pocket and draws out a tattered card, she slips it to Omar.

CU. OMAR

He takes the card. He doesn't know what it is.

CU. CARD

It's her ID. Fake. Says she's 22.

CU. SQUAD WINDOW

The cop is wearing reading glasses. He's studying Tom's ID.

TOM
Do you know what we're going down to tonight?

DRIVER
10 below.

TOM
That's rough.

COP
No bullshit tonight. Hear me?

TOM
I'm just here to get a free ticket. I got laid off at Ameritech. My wife...
(gestures to Leslie)
...that's her.

Tom waves to Leslie.

CU. COP

He leans forward and looks out the window.

HIS POV

Leslie waves. Omar and Asa are sitting next to her. Leslie has given them her scarves which they've wrapped around their faces, leaving only their eyes exposed. Their hoods are up and pulled tight across their foreheads.

CU. SQUAD. WINDOW

The Cop grins cordially.

TOM OC
She's a nurse's aide over at St. Luke's Presbyterian.

CU. LESLIE. PROFILE

The up-turned collar of her peacoat covers her mouth and chin and her hood covers her forehead but absent her scarves, the middle section of her face is exposed. Fine, high, cheek bones and a delicate, cold-rosy nose.

TOM OC
She keeps the money, and concert tickets are out of the question, while I'm laid off.

CU. OMAR AND ASA

Omar is studying Leslie's face. Asa is watching the police car. Omar elbows Asa, signaling him to look at Leslie. He takes a quick look.

TOM OC
So I said, what if we could get the tickets for free?

HIS POV

Leslie lifts her shoulders, blocking Asa's view of her face.

TOM OC
She said fine.

CU. LESLIE

She knows she's being watched. She hides behind her collar.

EXT. CLUB. POLICE CAR

The Cop returns Tom's ID.

COP
She didn't know you had to sit outside all night?

TOM
You got it. Let me tell you something else. She's eleven weeks pregnant. She takes a whiz every half hour. That ain't easy with five layers of clothes.

COP
Is she all right out here in the cold?

TOM
If it gets to be too much, we bail out. But you know what? It's kind of fun. And I'm starting to feel a little responsible for the two college girls next to my wife.

The Cop looks.

TOM
They're from DeKalb. They don't know the city.

COP
Ma'am? You want to step over here?

CU. OMAR

He's puzzled. The Cop is looking directly at him.

CU. LESLIE

She grins with satisfaction.

LESLIE
You're up. Be pretty.

EXT. CLUB. OMAR

He rises nervously. He looks down at Asa. Asa's too worried to enjoy Omar's embarrassment.

ASA
I hope you don't have to talk.

EXT. SQUAD CAR

Omar steps up to the car and offers the fake ID. The Cop takes it, reading it quickly.

COP
Listen, Leslie, this is a fun area during high traffic hours but after midnight, it can get a little rough.

Omar nods.

COP
A lot of creeps come out. They have no qualms about harassing women. You understand that?

Omar nods again. His hood is so tight his head barely moves.

COP
Yes?

OMAR
(softly)
Yes.

COP
How old's your friend?

OMAR
Twenty...one.

COP
Okay. You tell her what I told you. A beautiful girl like that is asking for trouble if she's not real careful.

OMAR
Thank you.

COP
Keep warm.

OMAR
OK.

He backs away from the car.

COP
All right, Tom, you take care.

TOM
Thanks, officer.

COP
No problem.

He steps back from the curb. The squad car pulls away.

EXT. CLUB

Omar sits down on his mattress, he hands the ID back to Leslie and whips the scarf off his face. He tosses it to Leslie.

OMAR
That sucked.

ASA
(with a laugh)
It was scary at the time but we can laugh now. He thought you were a chick.

OMAR
Shut up. He said you were beautiful.

ASA
(startled)
No way.

Tom zips himself back into his sleeping bag.

TOM
(to Leslie)
I said you were my pregnant wife.

LESLIE
Very cool.

TOM
I said the burbies were college girls.

ASA
Seriously? Me? You said I was a college girl?
(to Omar)
Is that true?

Omar nods glumly.

LESLIE
Look at it like this -- if you guys didn't have such strong feminine sides, it wouldn't have worked. We would have been busted.

ASA
You think we look feminine?

LESLIE
In the jump suits. Yeah.

OMAR
These are snowboarding suits.

LESLIE
You don't snowboard in a suit, man.

OMAR
These suits don't make us look like girls.

TOM
Cops thought so and they know, man, because of all the transvestite hookers they pick up.

ASA
Please tell me we don't look like hookers.

OMAR
Just to set the record straight? In Aspen or Deer Valley or Telluride? Any major ski resort? These suits are very much correct.

LESLIE
Skiing sucks.

OMAR
Do you ski?

LESLIE
What do you think?

OMAR
I think not and I also think that you shit on it because you don't ski. Or you can't ski.

LESLIE
Or I don't want to ski. Which is true.

OMAR
Typical remark.

LESLIE
What's more typical than two rich dorks from the suburbs defending people who slide down mountains on plastic boards dressed like Japanese cartoon characters?

OMAR
I might give your words some weight if you had some knowledge about the subject.

LESLIE
(to Asa)
What did you pay for that suit?

ASA
Me? I didn't buy it. It was a gift.

LESLIE
Take a guess.

ASA
A hundred.

LESLIE
My ass. Guess again.

ASA
Why does it matter?

LESLIE
Somebody paid at least 500 bucks for that piece of shit and you look like a chick in it. Why would somebody pay that kind of money? So other people will look at them and say, whoa, there's some money.

OMAR
(mocking her)
Or, whoa, that guy's warm.

LESLIE
Bullshit. Never happen.

OMAR
You can't win this.

LESLIE
It's a money show dressed-up as a sport.

OMAR
You know what? So what? There's rich people. Get rich if it bugs you so much.

LESLIE
What's your mother do for a living, man?

OMAR
She's an attorney.

LESLIE
My mother's a maid.

OMAR
So what?

TOM
This is giving me a gigantic headache.

LESLIE
Too bad.

TOM
Some are rich. Some are poor. Some are living. Some are dead. Roses are red, violets are blue. So what?

LESLIE
Why are they waiting for free tickets? Do they need free tickets?

OMAR
Free means free. It doesn't mean free to those who need it. The radio didn't say you had to be in need. Are you more deserving of a free ticket because your mother's a maid?

Leslie splashes the last of her coffee across Asa and splatters Omar.

OMAR
Thank you.

LESLIE
I know why you're here and free ticke[illegible] has nothing to do with it. You're slumming.

OMAR
That might be true if we knew what slumming was.

LESLIE
You know what it means. Your Dad knows what it means.

OMAR
You're so wise.

LESLIE
About suburban pussies like you two, I'm real wise. I'm Buddha.

ASA
Do you think we came down looking for chicks on the street in the middle of winter?

LESLIE
(without hesitation)
Yes.

TOM
I have an idea. Why don't you three move down the block? Have your war, Box and me will hold your place.

LESLIE
I'm done. Don't worry about it.

OMAR
You're done because you're out of ideas. You quit before you lost.

LESLIE
You know what this started with? Me helping you.

OMAR
How did you help us?

ASA
The ID.

OMAR
That was Tom.

ASA
Tom didn't give you the ID.

OMAR
She did but Tom talked to the cops. She might deserve some credit but not much.

ASA
Earlier she defended us against the old hippie.

LESLIE
Thank you. And this is what I get for my help. But you know what? I will not be discouraged. I will continue to help because I have humanity.

OMAR
You have coffee in your butt.

LESLIE
It's not in my butt. It's on my stomach. Try and remember that.

TOM
Are you going to cook your wieners, boys?

ASA
What about the cops?

TOM
I'm asking because if you don't do it soon, they'll be back. They patrol on the hour. So you should cook if cooking is what you want to do. Or wait until the next pass.

OMAR
(to Leslie)
Do you eat meat? Or is that unfair to something somewhere?

LESLIE
I eat meat. I won't eat yours.

OMAR
My meat is deeply saddened.

LESLIE
My sympathies.
(to Tom)
Honey? Will you hold my place. I have to go to the Doughnut shop.

OMAR
Get some coffee?

LESLIE
Lose some coffee, George. Don't fuck with my chair. I'll know.

She picks up her tool box and waddles off with it.

OMAR
Jesus Christ.

ASA
Thank you for starting that.

TOM
It's all right.

OMAR
For you. She likes you. She's having your baby.

TOM
She's lying.

ASA
About?

TOM
Everything.

OMAR
How do you know?

TOM
I meet a lot of strangers.

ASA
That was too much, it's too big to make-up on the spot.

TOM
You know what? It doesn't matter. When it gets a little later and a little colder, we'll get a little more honest.

ASA
Still think she's hot?

OMAR
No. She's scary.

TOM
Piece of advice? If she comes back and offers you more coffee? Don't drink it.

He pulls up the sleeping bag up around his shoulders, rolls on his side and settles in to catch some sleep.

CU. ASA

He looks down the street.

HIS POV

Leslie crosses the street at mid-block.

EXT. CLUB. GRILL

Asa and Omar kneel in front of the grill for warmth. Asa adds more coals.

ASA
She was right, wasn't she? About slumming. That's what we're essentially doing, right?

OMAR
It's not detectable, trust me.

ASA
But she got it.

OMAR
She doesn't know she got it.

CU. BOX. UP ANGLE

The eye-level flap is open.

CU. OMAR

He senses that he's being watched. He turns to the Box.

CU. FLAP

It snaps shut.

EXT. CLUB. OMAR. DOWN ANGLE

He's looking up at the Box.

OMAR
You're going to stay in there all night?

HIS POV

UP ANGLE on the Box. No response.

CU. OMAR

He turns away for a split second. He turns back.

CU. BOX

The flap snaps shut.

CU. OMAR

He's amused. He unzips his suit and reaches, with difficulty, into an inside pocket. He takes out a wallet and from it, a dollar.

CU. OMAR

He looks to...

HIS POV

Asa's putting the hot dogs on the grill.

EXT. CLUB. BOX

Omar moves around to the outside of the Box, away from the others. The Box turns with him. Omar folds his dollar bill length-wise. He carefully pushes it through the closed flap.

CU. BOX. BOTTOM

A flap at the bottom opens and an empty Coke can rolls out.

CU. OMAR. UP ANGLE

He looks down at the can with a grin.

EXT. CLUB. OMAR/BOX

Omar kicks the can aside. He backs away from the Box.

EXT. STREET. SIDEWALK. WIDE

Omar walks down the street. He EXITS FRAME. A beat and the Box ENTERS FRAME.

CU. OMAR

He glances over his shoulder to see the box following him. He turns back with a sly grin.

EXT. CORNER. GUTTER

A high curb. Omar's feet stop at the edge. A beat and the Box glides INTO FRAME.

CU. TRAFFIC LIGHT

Turns green.

EXT. CORNER

Omar starts to step off the curb but stops. The Box steps off. Omar hops into the street, steps in front of the Box as it's coming down off the sidewalk and puts his hand against it, holding it back. He looks down.

HIS POV

A small, black, lace-up shoe pokes out from under the Box.

CU. OMAR

He looks up with a satisfied grin.

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OMAR
Either you're a guy with tiny feet or you're a woman.
(pause)
I think it's the latter.

CU. FLAP

It opens.

INT. BOX. FLAP

Omar leans in for a closer look.

OMAR
Hello?

HIS POV

Through the opening we see a flash of flesh, pursed lips and then a spray of Coca Cola.

CU. OMAR. SIDE ANGLE

He's splattered with Coke and saliva.

INT. DOUGHNUT SHOP

The Owner/Operator looks to the rest room area, then at his watch.

INT. LADIES ROOM. DOOR

It is etched with graffiti, dotted with rust dots. A hot water bottle is hanging from a coat hook.

INT. LADIES ROOM. STALL DOOR

The door is open and on another hook on the back of the stall door hangs Leslie's orange trousers, a pair of blue sweats, red sweats, second-hand men's gray suit pants, the wool skirt, and a blue angora sweater. A set of baggy, worn thermals and several pairs of socks are slung over the top of the door.

INT. LADIES BATHROOM. ANOTHER STALL DOOR

Leslie's peacoat is hanging on the door, the inside to CAMERA. The interior is fitted with pockets, straps, and elastic bands that hold silverware, her cup, napkins, books, bottles of drinking water, a small, compressed bed pillow, a pair of Barbie Dolls, a folded rain parka, umbrella, screw driver, pliers, wire, batteries, CD's, Discman, stationery, pepperspray, a Swiss Army knife.

INT. BATHROOM. DIAPER CHANGING STATION

Her tool box is sitting on the dented, scratched, fold-down, stainless-steel tray. In and around it are personal affects in Ziploc bags -- cosmetics, toiletries, over-the-counter medicines -- a worn vinyl photo album, a towel, a wind-up alarm clock, stuffed bear, a tiny red Bible, a little cash, ID's, hair brushes, combs, barrettes, gum, shampoo, toothpaste, a toothbrush case, anti-perspirant, contact case, retainer holder, Tampax.

INT. LADIES ROOM. CU. LESLIE'S FEET

She's wearing Ziplocs on her stocking feet.

INT. LADIES ROOM. LESLIE FROM BEHIND

She's standing at a sink beside a trash bin overflowing with brown paper towels, below a defaced, metal mirror flanked by condom and tampon machines. Leslie's wearing a strap style T-shirt and silk thermal bottoms. She's brushing her teeth. She bends over and spits.

INT. DOUGHNUT SHOP. LADIES ROOM. DOOR

The Owner/Operator raps softly on the door.

OWNER/OPERATOR
Excuse me?

LESLIE OC
(sharply)
What?!

OWNER/OPERATOR
Can I ask what you're doing?

LESLIE OC
(indignant)
What does a woman do in the bathroom?

OWNER/OPERATOR
You've been in there twenty minutes. I was wondering if you were okay.

LESLIE OC
Obviously, I'm okay.

OWNER/OPERATOR
Just so you know, there's no bathing or sleeping allowed in the washrooms.

LESLIE OC
Trust me, boss, if I want to bathe or sleep in a toilet, I'll go to the Ritz Carlton.

OWNER/OPERATOR
Just so you know.

LESLIE OC
Get lost, please. You're interfering with my right to privacy.

OWNER/OPERATOR
This is not public property.

LESLIE OC
The normal and routine functions of my body are not public events. Ask the cops.

The Owner/Operator realizes that he's said all he can and backs off. He's suspicious but helpless to do anything about it.

ECU. GLOWING EMBER

A circle of red heat, pulsing slowly.

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT

Max is puffing on a cigar. He leans back in his chair and crosses his legs.

GEEK
You don't like my ideas?

MAX
I love your ideas. You're incredibly creative but what's a good idea if it doesn't make any money?

GEEK
You look at redevelopment in the short term. That's cool. That's where you make your money. I prefer a more comprehensive approach. In a few years to drive down here and see everything transformed, you know? A very hip area doing really well. That means something to me.

MAX
Looking at this neighborhood, when do you see the top?

GEEK
Five years.

MAX
(sarcastic)
Five? Really? Isn't that more like a suburban time-frame.

WALLIS
Did you get the check?

MAX
I'm talking, okay?
(to Geek)
Go on.

GEEK
It still looks pretty shitty to me. I don't see change coming quickly.

MAX
The building across the street has been sold twice in six months. First price was six fifty. I bought it for one point two. It'll double again before I move a brick. When the money gets serious, you won't believe how fast the garbage moves out.

GEEK
If that's the case, maybe I'm better off passing on this neighborhood and looking west.

MAX
Then you're at your long time frame again the displacement here will most likely relocate west. And west of here is just hell. You're talking about community building and that shit's slow. You don't go in and blow-out crack houses in an afternoon.

He has a sip of port and examines his cigar ash.

MAX
Come in with me or wait. It's your choice.
(to his glass)
You are a great little port.

WALLIS
Can we get the check?

MAX
What's your rush?

WALLIS
Jill wants to go.

GEEK'S GIRLFRIEND
(intimidated)
I'm cool. It's okay. Finish your drink.

MAX
Thank you.
(to Wallis)
Relax.

EXT. SIDE STREET

The college couple we saw earlier, has had their fill of food, fun, and drink and are returning to their Honda parked at the mouth of an alley. College Boy is bombed. College Girl helps him along.

COLLEGE BOY
You know what? I'm not going to make it to Evanston. I gotta take a whiz.

COLLEGE GIRL
Oh, Jesus. Why didn't you go at the bar?

COLLEGE BOY
I did. But I gotta do it again. Do you know how many beers I had?

College Girl is disgusted.

COLLEGE BOY
It's cool. I'll be right back.

He tries to unlock the car. He can't manage. She yanks the keys out of his hand and unlocks the driver's side door.

COLLEGE BOY
I respect you too much to piss in the car.

COLLEGE GIRL
I hope your balls freeze.

She gets in the car and slams the door.

EXT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT

Max and Wallis and the Geek and his Girlfriend exit. They Euro kiss farewells.

MAX
Think about it and call me Monday.

GEEK
You got it.

WALLIS
Goodnight.

GEEK'S GIRLFRIEND
See you guys.

The Geek and his Girlfriend head into the wind. Max and Wallis cross the street.

MAX
What a cretin.

WALLIS
I wasn't impressed.

MAX
He's sitting on a pile of family money. Doesn't have a clue how to use it.

EXT. CLUB

The grill is going, The Box is leaning over looking at the grill, Tom's sleeping with his mouth open, Asa's grilling hot dogs. Omar is sitting on the mattress, slightly sullen. Leslie has returned and is sitting in her lounger. She'll have nothing to do with the others.

CU. OMAR

He looks up with a glare.

HIS POV

The Box turns to him. The flap opens.

CU. OMAR

He makes a deliberate show of turning away.

CU. FLAP

Remains open.

CU. ASA

He looks at the Box.

ASA
I'd be careful not to get too close to the flame. It could be both revealing and painful.

CU. BOX. UP ANGLE

The Box moves back a step.

EXT. STREET

Max and Wallis approach.

CU. LESLIE

She watches Wallis and Max cautiously.

EXT. CLUB

Max and Wallis step up on the curb. Asa and Omar look up. The Box turns to the couple.

MAX
You can't do this.

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OMAR
What?

MAX
You can't cook on the street.

OMAR
Is it a problem?

MAX
There wouldn't be an ordinance against it if there wasn't.

OMAR
It's cold out. We're just having a little something to eat. It's okay. We'll be careful.

MAX
If you're cold go to a shelter.

WALLIS
Let's go.

MAX
I could be a hard-ass.

ASA
We're almost done.

MAX
I don't care. Put out the fire.

CU. LESLIE

She's been watching and listening.

LESLIE
Sir?

CU. MAX

He looks to Leslie, expecting lip.

CU. LESLIE

She gives it to him.

LESLIE
Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you were the mayor.

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CU. MAX

A dismissive smile.

MAX
I know the mayor.

EXT. CLUB. TOM AND LESLIE

The talk has awakened Tom. He rolls over.

TOM
It's awfully hard to sleep with you morons talking.

He squints at Max and Wallis.

TOM
Oh, Christ.

LESLIE
Friends of the mayor.

CU. LESLIE

She grins, pleased, that she got him to respond strongly.

LESLIE
Is that howcome you can park in a no-parking zone?

CU. MAX

Big, confident grin.

MAX
As far as the precinct captain's concerned, there's no car there.
(to Wallis)
Am I right? Do you see a car?

CU. TOM

He watches impatiently.

CU. WALLIS

She's embarrassed.

WALLIS
Max? Let's go inside. Please?

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CU. LESLIE

She picks up the name.

LESLIE
Max, darling?

EXT. CLUB. MAX AND WALLIS

She takes his arm.

MAX
I own the building. Get it?

CU. LESLIE

She nods over-enthusiastically.

LESLIE
I get it, developer scum.

CU. MAX

He notes Tom's greater age.

MAX
Are you in charge here?

EXT. CLUB. TOM AND LESLIE

Tom looks at Leslie. Puzzled.

TOM
(to Max)
In charge of what? This is a ticket line.

LESLIE
He's the one shutting the club down. So he can put in yet another coffee bar.

TOM
The cruel landlord.

CU. MAX

He dismisses the insults with a grin.

MAX
(to Leslie)
Why don't you get your facts straight? The management didn't have a Class III Amusement license and unfortunately when they applied, the city denied the request. I'm obligated as the owner to abide by zoning regulations.

CU. TOM AND LESLIE

He nods.

LESLIE
Of course and how odd that the city wouldn't grant a license. After they've been having music here for like twenty five years.

CU. MAX

He shrugs.

MAX
The people have spoken through their representatives that they don't want live music here anymore.

EXT. CLUB

Leslie laughs.

LESLIE
What people? Anybody who actually lives here? Anybody who was born here?

Wallis gives Max a tug.

WALLIS
I'm cold.

MAX
(ignoring Wallis)
Let's put the fire out. Quit fucking around.

Wallis loses her patience.

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WALLIS
Give me the keys.

MAX
Take it easy.
(to Tom)
I can call the police. Do you understand that?

TOM
The cops have already been by. If this is okay with them, then I guess it doesn't matter if I understand you or not. Which I actually do.

LESLIE
This isn't the first time people lined up on the sidewalk which you DON'T own. And that grill, as soon as you call the cops, ceases to exist in this location. Your ornery plot is doomed, steely buns. Listen to your wife. Go inside.
(to Wallis)
Cold out, huh?

Wallis ignores her. Max knows it's a draw.

MAX
Cook your fuckin' food and put the fire out. If I come out and it's still burning, I'm calling the cops. If they chose to overlook it -- again -- then they'll pay the price.

LESLIE
Cops are on our side, man. They don't make any money either. They know what people like you are up to.

MAX
Remember this. People like me pay for your right to be nothing.

Max steps around Asa and Omar.

MAX
(to Asa and Omar)
Trash.

He heads down the block. Wallis follows.

LESLIE
(calling after Max)
Really? Who pays your insane rent?

EXT. BUILDING ADJACENT TO THE CLUB. MAX

He unlocks a door. Wallis hurries inside.

LESLIE OC
Who buys your garbage?

CU. LESLIE

Shouting down the street.

LESLIE
Who lives by your perverted standards?

CU. MAX

A cocky grin.

MAX
You.

He goes inside and locks the door.

EXT. ALLEY. COLLEGE BOY

He's relieving himself beside a dumpster. He's as cautious and apprehensive as his blood alcohol will allow, looking up and down the alley with wide eyes. Suddenly, the dumpster lid slams open. College Boy SHRIEKS and reels back.

EXT. ALLEY. DUMPSTER

Mr. 66 rises up out of the dumpster.

MR. 66
What the fuck are you doing, man?

CU. COLLEGE BOY

He stares in horror as he collects his goods and returns it to his trousers.

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CU. MR. 66

He's furious.

MR. 66
You're pissing on my crib!

CU. COLLEGE BOY

He holds up his hands in an unconscious display of submissiveness.

COLLEGE BOY
I didn't know it was your crib. I'm sorry. I'm leaving.

CU. MR. 66

He stands up in the dumpster threateningly.

MR. 66
One fuckin' minute, pal.

He puts his hands on his hip and draws in a huge, whistling breath.

MR. 66
Your water smells like frankfurters.

CU. COLLEGE BOY

He thinks about it. He sniffs. He smells the hot dogs.

EXT. ALLEY

Mr. 66 jumps down out of the dumpster. College Boy backs off.

MR. 66
You're sick, man. That's strong.

COLLEGE BOY
It's a restaurant.
(starts to back away)
I gotta go.

MR. 66
Don't move a fuckin' muscle. You run on me, I'll give you a new asshole with my throwing knife. Restaurants are closed. Nobody's serving but White Castle. If your piss smelled like that, you'd be dead.

COLLEGE BOY
How about a few bucks?

Mr. 66 continues to sniff as he holds out his hand. College Boy counts off a few singles and puts them in Mr. 66's hand.

MR. 66
Thank you, my brother. Peace.
(big, whistling sniff)
Wait a Jack Daniels Minute! You know what that is?

College Boy shakes his head, no.

MR. 66
That's them little space rangers. They're trying to skin me out of the wieners.

He hops out of the dumpster.

MR. 66
Can't trust anybody under forty, man. A bunch of nihilistic cork soakers. Mean bastards. Mean and crazy. Fuckin' spade kids treat me like shit. White kids run when they see me. There's no more respect for experience. Right?

COLLEGE BOY
Right.

MR. 66
What do you call yourself, brother?

COLLEGE BOY
Tom.

MR. 66
(sly grin)
Don't bullshit me. Come on. Real names.

COLLEGE BOY
Evan.

MR. 66
That's a lot better. You ever listen to Canned Heat?

COLLEGE BOY
No.

MR. 66
Good shit. Music's dead, you know that?

COLLEGE BOY
Yep.

Mr. 66 puts his arm around College Boy's shoulder. College Boy stiffens in fear and revulsion.

MR. 66
I can't change if the music's gone. I gotta stay the same. Like a big, old, mobius strip, I just keep going round and round. I grew my hair long with the Beatles. Tripped with the Dead. Became a poet with the Doors. Discovered junk with Cream. Got the blues from Canned Heat. In '69 I shot my old lady.

COLLEGE BOY
You killed your wife?

MR. 66
We weren't married.

COLLEGE BOY
But you shot a woman?

MR. 66
Shot her dead. Caught her messing round with another man. Is that a beer in your pocket?

Mr. 66 takes the bottle out of College Boy's pocket.

MR. 66
Should we do it?

COLLEGE BOY
Go ahead.

MR. 66
You oughta drink first, man. About an hour ago I horked-up something three/four inches long, two/three inches deep, yellow-colored, with a big, old, motherfuckin' blood vessel growing in it. Shit like that usually'll make a beer go flat.

College Boy stares at Mr. 66 in horror.

MR. 66
Tip it, Slim.

EXT. STREET. TIME AND TEMPERATURE BILLBOARD

A distant billboard for a carpet chain announces a time and temperature of 1:50 AM, -2. CAMERA TILTS DOWN to a rooftop skylight. Below is a large bathroom. Wallis is getting dressed. Her clothes are scattered across the stone floor.

INT. LOFT SPACE

A vast, open office. Max is behind an enormous, antique library table. He's reading faxes. He's in his shirt and socks. His trousers are missing. On the walls are renderings of new buildings, rehab projects, and comprehensive neighborhood plans. Cartoons are playing silently on a large screen monitors suspended from the ceiling. 80's POP MUSIC is playing on the house music system. The furniture is carefully designed urban second-hand. Wallis exits the bathroom in her skirt and open blouse.

WALLIS
How much longer are you going to be?

MAX
(preoccupied)
I don't know. Why?

WALLIS
It's getting late. I want to go home and sleep.

As she approaches, she scoops up Max's trousers with her foot and kicks them into the air. She grabs them and throws them over her shoulder.

MAX
I'm faxing this dumb-ass interior decorator in London. I have to wait for his response.

WALLIS
Why do you have to use a decorator from London?

MAX
I want the club I'm doing to look like it's a private men's club in London.

WALLIS
Fair enough.

She dumps his trousers on the desk.

WALLIS
Which one is it?

Max turns and points to the second rendering nearest him on the wall. Wallis crosses to it.

CU. WALLIS

She looks at the fanciful drawing.

CU. RENDERING

It's Max's vision of the club. The bones have been saved. The entrance has been glorified with pillars and steps, the exterior is reclad in limestone facing. Flags flank etched glass, brass-trimmed doors. A liveried doorman is welcoming a smart couple as other smart couples approach. An American interpretation of a Pall Mall club. DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CLUB

As it is now -- decaying comfortably, no doorman, no smart couples. Sparks blowing from the barbecue. A refrigerator box and four people. The only similarity is the Lexus parked in front of the building in the rendering and in front of the real building. It is silent. Peace has come at last. The hour is late, the temperature is dropping.

CU. TOM

He curls into his bag and zips it over his head.

CU. OMAR AND ASA

They're laying on the mattress, wrapped in their silver blankets.

CU. BOX

Rattling in the wind. A finger pulls the flap closed.

CU. LESLIE

She's staring up at the cloudless sky.

HER POV

A frigid moon.

CU. LESLIE

She looks down at Asa and Omar. She pulls her arms out of her coat sleeves and, inside her coat, crosses them on her belly as she listens.

CU. ASA AND OMAR

They're looking up at the stars.

ASA
Looks like Wyoming.

OMAR
Sort of. Jackson Hole.

ASA
Cold, huh?

OMAR
Yeah. With the wind.

ASA
Didn't count on the wind.
(pause)
Pretty quiet though. Considering we're downtown.
I thought it would be noisy all the time.

OMAR
What would you think about bailing-out?

ASA
Leave? Why?

OMAR
(stares at Asa)
You think this is fun?

ASA
Maybe it's not fun. It's interesting. You have to admit that.

OMAR
A hernia test is interesting but it's not fun. The experience is not meeting my expectations.

CU. LESLIE. UP ANGLE

Looking down on the boys.

LESLIE
It's not over yet.

HER POV

Asa and Omar look up and back at her.

CU. LESLIE

She's soft and quiet.

LESLIE
But if you start getting cold? You have to take off. It's serious at this temperature. Once you get cold you don't have a lot of time.

CU. ASA AND OMAR

Asa nods. Omar stares contemptuously.

OMAR
You've been very helpful.

CU. LESLIE

She smiles sweetly. She lays back and closes her eyes.

LESLIE
Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I die before I wake,
I pray the Lord, my soul to take.
(pause)
Good night.

She pulls her head inside of her coat and disappears.

CU. ASA AND OMAR

Asa looks at Omar.

OMAR
Whatever.

He pulls the silver blanket over his head. Asa lays still for a moment, looking up at Leslie's chair. He rolls over, to face away from Omar and the others and pulls the blanket over his head.

CU. BLANKET

A long beat and Asa rips the blanket off. He stares in horror.

HIS POV

Mr. 66 is leaning INTO CAMERA.

CU. ASA

He screams.

CU. LESLIE

Her head pops up from inside her jacket.

CU. OMAR

He scrambles off the mattress.

CU. TOM

He unzips his sleeping bag and looks out.

CU. BOX

It turns INTO CAMERA. The flap opens.

CU. MR. 66

Big, sloppy, drunken grin.

MR. 66
Where's Daddy's dinner?

EXT. CLUB

Asa scoots back on the mattress. Mr. 66 stands up. Leslie slips her arms into her jacket. College Boy is leaning against the Lexus.

TOM
Oh, shit! I thought you left.

MR. 66
You knew I was coming back.
Peachy promised me some tamales.

TOM
Food's gone.

MR. 66
Peachy? Is that true. Did you
give away my tamales?

LESLIE
We didn't have tamales. It was
hot dogs.

MR. 66
Not according to my little
girlfriend here. Sweet baby?

ASA
It was hot dogs.

MR. 66
It was hot dogs? Where's the
authoritarian dictator bastard
get tamales from?
(to Tom)
Why'd you tell me I was getting
tamales if all I was getting was
a cheap-ass hot dog?

TOM
Have a few drinks, Joe?

MR. 66
You know, daddio? As a matter of
fact, I did have a couple of
cocktails.

ASA
You know what I think?

MR. 66
Get back in the kitchen! Fix my
dinner!

ASA
He's going to puke.

OMAR
Oh, my God!

Tom rips open the sleeping bag.

TOM
That's enough. Get going!

LESLIE
Be careful, Tom. He's loaded.
(to College Boy)
You want to help?

COLLEGE BOY
Yeah. Hey 66? Man? Let's go for a walk.

MR. 66
I ain't leaving until my old lady puts some tamales on the table.

Asa and Omar scoot back out of range.

MR. 66
Where are you going, honey?
(pause)
To see Buddy?

College Boy and Tom pull Mr. 66 back and turn him to the Lexus.

MR. 66
I better not catch you with Buddy, man. I'll shoot you dead. One more fuckin' time. Dead.

TOM
She's not going anywhere.

MR. 66
She better fuckin' make the tamales, man.

He breaks the holds and charges Asa.

MR. 66
STAY THE HELL AWAY FROM BUDDY! YOU HEAR ME, BITCH?!

He grabs Asa.

MR. 66
YOU HEAR ME?! YOU WANT TO DIE?!

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CU. ASA

He's horrified, frozen in terror.

EXT. CLUB

Tom grabs Mr. 66 and pulls him away.

TOM
Help me!

CU. COLLEGE BOY

He looks to Tom. He shakes his head.

COLLEGE BOY
My hands are numb. I'm gonna get sick.

CU. TOM

He struggles with Mr. 66.

TOM
Where the fuck are the cops?

CU. MR. 66

He's panting hard, gnashing his teeth.

MR. 66
You're not fooling anybody, bitch. And you know it, don't you?

EXT. STREET

Tom runs 66 into the street.

MR. 66
I'm okay. It's cool.

TOM
I know.

EXT. OPPOSING SIDEWALK

Tom pulls 66 through parked cars to the covered doorway of the Italian restaurant.

EXT. CLUB

Leslie gets out of her chair.

LESLIE
(to Omar)
Can I have one of your blankets?

Omar shakes his head, no.

OMAR
Not a chance.

Asa willingly hands over his. He looks at Omar with disappointment.

OMAR
You think you'll ever get that thing clean?

CU. TOM

Panting, out of breath from the struggle.

TOM
Sit down, man.

CU. MR. 66

Wild eyes turn mellow and moisten.

MR. 66
I didn't mean it. She was all I really had. I got mad, you know. I thought I was losing her. Because she was with Buddy before she knew me. I go way back with Buddy. Right?

CU. TOM

He nods.

TOM
Long time.

He lowers Mr. 66 to the ground slowly.

CU. 66

As he sinks.

MR. 66
He's my man, see? And I never loved anybody before her and she was his and I wanted her. But Buddy loved her too, man.

EXT. DOORWAY

Tom sits 66 down on the pavement. He kneels in front of him.

MR. 66
You know how pretty she was?

Tom nods.

MR. 66
She sang, too, man.

TOM
Real good.

MR. 66
She could cook Mexican. She kept Buddy's place real nice. I just loved her, man.

TOM
I know.

MR. 66
When I was overseas I used to write her all the time because I missed her. I was sick from missing her. I was on the river, you know? Navy.

TOM
Yeah.

He looks over his shoulder to the club.

HIS POV

Leslie's crossing the street with the blanket.

CU. TOM

He angrily waves her off.

CU. MR. 66

He carries on, not noticing that Tom's been distracted.

MR. 66
Shelling river banks. Up and down all night. And we landed one time, one night. Because we were curious, you know. Curious if we were hitting anything. We weren't supposed to do it but we did.

EXT. STREET. LESLIE

She ignores Tom and continues.

HER POV

Tom kneeling over Mr. 66, Mr. 66 talking to himself. CAMERA PUSHING IN.

CU. 66

He looks up at Tom.

MR. 66
You know what it was we were hitting?

CU. TOM

He's worried for Leslie. A quick look to 66.

TOM
No.

CU. MR. 66

A cold tear runs down his cheek.

MR. 66
Human beings. Not soldiers. Human beings.

EXT. DOORWAY. LESLIE

She leans INTO CLOSE-UP.

LESLIE
66?

CU. TOM

He cautiously holds his arm between 66 and Leslie.

LESLIE
Up your butt.

All she finds is a pack of Marlboros.

LESLIE
This is going to be a problem. He doesn't have a wallet. And I think he's out for the night. He'll be all right, huh?

ASA
The blanket's good for 30 below.

OMAR
(to Leslie)
Why don't you take him to your house?

Asa laughs bitterly.

ASA
You really are fucked-up. How did I not know this?

OMAR
You're not that smart.

ASA
You're embarrassing.

Omar rises. He pats his rear end, feeling for his wallet.

OMAR
Luckily, I have my wallet.

ASA
You're taking off?

OMAR
Looks that way.

ASA
Pussy.

OMAR
It has nothing to do with being a pussy, Asa. It has only to do with how boring this event has become. How predictable. How fucking rote it is. I bequeath you my mattress and grill. Use them in good health.

ASA

Loser.

He crosses to the Box.

OMAR
Box? The time has come to face the people.

He grabs the Box at the middle and in a single, swift move, lifts it off.

CU, OMAR

He's puzzled.

HIS POV

A plastic milk carton, cigarette butts, a Coke can.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET

College Boy's Honda cruises slowly down a residential street and stops at the intersection of a commercial street. The left turn signal blinks.

EXT. HONDA. WINDSHIELD

College Girl peers out the window. Her anger is tempered by concern. The Honda turns the corner.

EXT. BUILDING ADJACENT TO THE CLUB

The door opens and Max and Wallis exit.

EXT. SIDEWALK. MAX AND WALLIS

Max puts his arm around Wallis and fishes the car keys out of his pocket. He looks ahead, slows as his anger rises.

MAX
Son of a bitch.

HIS POV

College Boy asleep against the side of his car. Asa and Leslie sitting together on the mattress. Tom in the sleeping bag. Omar is gone.

EXT. CLUB

Max charges INTO FRAME.

CU. MR. 66

He looks up at Leslie.

MR. 66
Sounds obvious doesn't it?

CU. LESLIE

She doesn't know what he's referring to. She nods anyway. She covers him with the blanket.

CU. MR. 66

He's stricken with a deep, uncontrollable shiver. It passes.

MR. 66
If you do that, don't stop and look. Don't look at what you did. Keep on going. Remember that. The Powers That Be don't want you looking at what they tell you to do. When you start thinking for yourself, they don't have any more power.

CU. LESLIE

She looks up at Tom, puzzled.

CU. TOM

He mouths, "VIET NAM".

CU. LESLIE

She looks at Mr. 66. She nods.

CU. MR. 66

He lays his head back against the brick and looks at Leslie.

MR. 66
Buddy didn't go. He got his ass into college quick, didn't he? So he got to stay with you. He's a lucky son of a bitch, huh?

CU. LESLIE

She understands that he's not seeing her while he's talking. She nods.

MR. 66

He nods.

MR. 66
Fuckin' A, he's lucky.

EXT. RESTAURANT

Tom rises.

TOM
Get some sleep, man.
Everything's gonna be brand new
in the morning.

He motions for Leslie to go back across the street.

LESLIE
Is he going to be all right?

Tom nods but he doesn't know. Leslie steps back.

CU. MR. 66

He slumps over.

CU. LESLIE

She steps forward, concerned.

CU. TOM

He looks back at Leslie.

TOM
It's okay.

CU. LESLIE

Not sure she can believe him.

LESLIE
You're sure?

EXT. STREET

Tom takes Leslie by the elbow and backs her to the sidewalk.

EXT. CLUB. ASA

He watches Tom and Leslie cross back. The fear has subsided leaving him looking helpless and very young.

EXT. CLUB. WIDE

Leslie stops at the curb and looks back across the street. We HEAR THE THUMP OF SUBWOOFERS APPROACHING.

HER POV

The restaurant and Mr. 66 curled in the shadows. A Jeep packed with suburban revelers races THROUGH FRAME. The THUMP OF THE SUBWOOFERS gives way to the SOUND OF A WHISTLING WIND.

CU. MR. 66

He closes his eyes.

EXT. CLUB

Omar is sitting on the edge of the mattress, sullen and sour. He's mindlessly stirring the dying fire. Tom is straightening his sleeping bag, preparing another attempt at sleep. College Boy is leaning against the Lexus, hands on the hood, head hung. He's dizzy and sick. Leslie and Asa are helping him, one on each side.

LESLIE
Were you with somebody?

College Boy nods.

LESLIE
Girlfriend?

College Boy's knees buckle, he slides down the side of the Lexus, resting his face against the wheel panel.

ASA
Do you have a car?

OMAR
He can't drive a car if he's that drunk.

Asa looks back angrily at Omar.

ASA
One of us could drive, asshole.

OMAR
You? On your DUI?

ASA
You on yours?

LESLIE
(to Tom)
We're going to have to deal with this. He'll freeze to death.

TOM
He's not going to die.

LESLIE
Oh. So, maybe he loses an ear or his finger tips. That's okay?

TOM
I didn't come here to be a crisis manager.

OMAR
Let me ask a question. Who got drunk?

ASA
Why don't you shut-up, if you can't help?

OMAR
Fuck you.

ASA
Fuck you.

OMAR
You never helped anybody in your life. All of a sudden you're converted.
(sarcastic)
And I wonder why?

Asa steps away, crossing to the mattress.

ASA
Get off your ass and go call a cab.

OMAR
Eat shit.

ASA
This attitude's for real?

OMAR
Sure feels real.

He shakes his head in disgust.

ASA
(to Leslie)
I'll call a cab.

LESLIE
(to Tom)
You won't deal with this?

TOM
I'm not in the business of rescuing drunk college kids. A fucked-up Vet's one thing but I draw the line at puke-drunk poli-sci majors. Everybody knew the weather. It's not a secret. Don't come here if you're needy.

LESLIE
It's a bite when life intrudes isn't it?

TOM
Don't talk to me about life until you've had some.

LESLIE
What the fuck kind of life do you have? Thirty years old sitting on a line for a free ticket.
(to Omar)
Give me the blanket.

OMAR
Get your own.

LESLIE
You fuckin' jerk.

She crosses to the mattress and rips the blanket off Omar. He grabs for it. She tears it away.

OMAR
Whore.

LESLIE
You wish.

Leslie turns College Boy around to face her. She covers him with the blanket.

TOM
Have you considered a career in nursing?

LESLIE
How can you handle the situation with 66 and then just turn it off when somebody else needs help?

TOM
Did you have a butterfly hospital when your were little?

LESLIE
Answer my question.

TOM
It wasn't an act of compassion. I simply didn't want to go through the drama bums can create when they lose touch.

LESLIE
Even if he was a Vet?

TOM
Being a Vet's fine. I respect that. But my motivation was to avoid getting doused with vomit or piss or blood. It was a health thing.

LESLIE
Liar.

TOM
Don't project your big heart on me. I'm not like that. I'm a thirty year old who sits on line for free tickets. That's where I begin and where I end. I'm not a member of the Society of Pavement People.

ASA
Are you serious, Tom? Or is this a joke?

TOM
Am I joking?

ASA
Are you?

TOM
It's not a joke. I can tolerate company. I can make small talk. It prevents serious discussion. I don't want friends. I just want a ticket. If college boys want to come down to my neighborhood and get shit-pants drunk, I can't stop them. But I certainly don't feel an obligation to provide nursing care.

OMAR
Amen.

TOM
(to Omar)
And I don't need you either.

ASA
Why did you lie to the cops for us?

TOM
I didn't want the bullshit. It's better if the cops come and go.

LESLIE
Liar.

TOM
You think I wanted to entertain a couple of knobs from Winnetka all night?

OMAR
You're not all that entertaining, man.

TOM
Did you honestly think you'd get laid in sub-zero weather?

Tom laughs.

OMAR
Obviously, not.

ASA
Actually, we did.

OMAR
You did.

ASA
Do you want me to quote you?

OMAR
Whatever.

ASA
Whatever. Everything's whatever.

OMAR
Whatever.

ASA
That's what we came down for. We didn't think about the weather.

OMAR
And look what we found. You, rather. What you found.

CU. LESLIE

She stares at Omar.

CU. OMAR

He stares back.

OMAR
You know what you are.

CU. LESLIE

She holds her temper and looks away.

EXT. CLUB

Omar laughs. Leslie ignores him.

ASA
I'll call the cab.

LESLIE
Let me get his wallet so you'll have an address.

She searches College Boy.

OMAR
You're pretty good at lifting wallets off drunk frat boys.

MAX
Goddamn it! Get the fuck away from the car!

He tears the blanket off College Boy and grabs him by the shoulders. Max throws College Boy aside. He's dead weight. His head hits the pavement with a hollow SMACK.

CU. TOM

He watches. A cold stare. He slowly unzips his bag.

CU. LESLIE

She scrambles to get her arms in her suit.

LESLIE
You asshole!

CU. ASA

He jumps up.

EXT. CLUB. STREET

Max unlocks the door. Wallis hurries INTO FRAME and gets into the car. Max turns to CAMERA.

MAX
I'm calling the cops. I've had enough of you filthy parasites...

CU. LESLIE

She lunges FORWARD with a SCREAM.

EXT. STREET. CAR

Leslie charges Max, throwing him back against the car.

CU. TOM

He unzips his bag.

TOM
Shit!

EXT. STREET. CAR

Max shoves Leslie back into Asa. He steadies her and rushes Max. Max turns. Asa can only get one hand on his coat. Max gets both hands on Asa and easily throws him down.

EXT. SIDEWALK

Asa lands awkwardly on his knees.

CU. MAX'S LEG

It draws back.

CU. ASA

He looks around...

HIS POV

A steel toed lace-up shoe heads into CAMERA.

CU. ASA

The shoe grazes him. It's just square enough to break his lip.

EXT. CLUB

Max steps back. He looks at the mess on the pavement. It shocks him.

MAX
I was serious. You didn't listen.

CU. COLLEGE BOY

Out cold, a trickle of blood oozing from his brow.

CU. ASA. FROM BEHIND

He rises on his knees. Leslie COMES INTO FRAME and lifts his face to hers. She winces. She looks beyond him to...

HER POV

Max is looking down on her.

MAX
I warned you people.

CU. TOM

He's standing. Staring.

CU. MAX

He looks at Tom. A trifle worried.

MAX
I don't want any more shit.

EXT. CLUB

Tom approaches slowly, his temper rising. Max crosses around to the front of the car.

MAX
Everybody goes home. It's okay.

Tom runs his finger along the upper line of the car, tracing the trunk, the roof, the hood. Max opens his door. Tom slowly, carefully, gracefully climbs up on the hood.

MAX
Get off the car or I call the police.

TOM
What car? There's no car here, remember? Call the precinct captain. He won't see a car.

MAX
I'm not going to fuck around with you. Get off the car.

EXT. CLUB. LESLIE

She rises.

LESLIE
Tom? He's leaving.

CU. TOM

He looks over his shoulder at Leslie.

TOM
He's here for good. You're leaving. I'm leaving.

CU. LESLIE

She knows Tom's heading for serious trouble.

LESLIE
You know what I mean.

CU. TOM

He nods.

TOM
And you know what I mean.

CU. MAX

He's watching Tom carefully, moving forward. He lunges.

EXT. STREET. LEXUS

Tom stomps on Max's wrist. Max pulls back.

INT. LEXUS. WINDSHIELD

Tom crashes his boot into the windshield. The glass fractures and caves-in.

EXT. STREET. CAR

Tom jumps down off the car. Max shrieks at him.

MAX
That's it, man! I hope you got a lawyer.

CU. TOM

Looks across the roof at Max.

TOM
Don't call the cops.

CU. MAX

Across the roof.

MAX
Are you kidding?

CU. TOM

He shakes his head, no.

TOM
I don't want you to call the cops.

CU. MAX

He laughs.

MAX
That's too fuckin' bad.

He wraps on the window.

MAX
(to Wallis)
Open it.

ECU. DOOR LOCK

It pops up.

INT. LEXUS. DRIVER'S SIDE

Max opens the door.

INT. LEXUS. PASSENGER SIDE

Tom whips open the door and reaches rudely across Wallis, giving her a faceful of ass. He grabs the car phone and with a powerful tug, rips out the entire cell phone unit, pulling up a section of carpet with it.

EXT. STREET. T

He pulls the unit out of the car. A few wires are still connected. Tom gives a sharp yank and tears the phone free. Wallis slams the door.

CU. MAX

Across the roof.

MAX
You're insane.

HIS POV

Across the roof. Tom slams the phone unit down on the hood of the car.

TOM
Don't call the police.

INT. LEXUS. DRIVER'S SIDE

Max tosses the phone into the backseat and gets in.

INT. LEXUS. WALLIS AND MAX

Max slams his door and starts the car.

WALLIS
Way to go.

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MAX
Fuck you.

He starts the engine. He flips Tom the bird and pulls out.

EXT. STREET

The Lexus squirms and squeals away from the curb and burns off into the night.

EXT. CLUB. ASA

He runs his tongue across his teeth, checking for damage. His lip is bleeding.

EXT. CLUB. CU. TOM

Tom looks at a fresh wound bruise on his knuckle.

EXT. CLUB

Leslie's cradling College Boy's head in her lap. Asa comes over and helps her last College Boy to his feet.

TOM
The cops'll be here soon. They'll care of that mess.

Leslie gives Tom a cold stare.

TOM
Don't give me the evil eye. He doesn't live here. This is my neighborhood.

LESLIE
Your neighborhood? You own it? For your information, I live here, too.

Asa and Leslie walk College Boy to her chair and lay him down. Leslie opens her tool kit and removes a Wash 'n Dry and tends to College Boy's wound.

TOM
You think you're going to be welcome here with your orange chair and your tool box when his big brothers and sisters come in? You think those smug bastards are going to be amused?

ASA
If I could interrupt for a second.
(to Tom)
If the cops are coming, maybe you should take off.

TOM
If I'm going to run, it's not going to be for a broken windshield and a car phone.

He crosses to his chaise and remakes his bed.

LESLIE
So what are you going to do about it?

TOM
Do about what?

LESLIE
The neighborhood.

TOM
Like everybody else, I guess I'm going to move.

LESLIE
You're gonna fold that easy?

Leslie puts antiseptic cream on College Boy's split brow.

TOM
No, I'm going to put together a coalition of broke musicians and poets and painters and junkies and whores and we're going to lobby our alderman.

She opens a bandage.

LESLIE
In other words, you're not going to do anything?

She bandages College Boy's wound.

LESLIE
(to College Boy)
You're going to hurt like hell in the morning.

Leslie leads Asa to the mattress and sits him down. She kneels in front of him and cleans his wound.

TOM
I just kicked-out a windshield. Was that nothing?

Leslie gently rubs antiseptic cream on Asa's lip.

LESLIE
Are you prepared to go berserk ten times a day? Won't that get a little tiring?

Tom doesn't have an answer. He returns to his chaise.

CU. LESLIE AND ASA

She finishes treating the wound. She looks at it and smiles.

LESLIE
And a kiss to make it all better.

She gently and delicately kisses his lip, away from the wound. He's stunned.

EXT. CLUB

She stands up, gathers her tool box, and returns it to it's place beside her chair. Asa is frozen with the shock of the sudden kiss.

LESLIE
But you did get involved with 66. What was that about?

TOM
That had nothing to do with you or him. That was about me.

Tom lays on the chaise.

LESLIE
You like to think that. Don't you?

TOM
Apparently.

LESLIE
There's nothing wrong with showing some compassion, some understanding, some humanity. You're allowed. The last stoic male died a long time ago. You can wear a few emotions on your sleeve.

TOM
I'll remember that.

LESLIE
Why don't you deal with it?

TOM
I did.

Leslie sits on the edge of Asa's mattress.

LESLIE
You're the worst goddamn misanthrope that ever was.

CU. TOM

An irritated scowl.

CU. LESLIE

She grins.

LESLIE
You don't fool me for a minute. You can't act worth shit. You like me. You like Asa. You even like 66. Why do you have to pretend you don't? Are you afraid that if we find out, we're going to come over and eat your peanut butter and drink your Mountain Dew?

CU. TOM

He zips his sleeping bag to his neck. He's uncomfortable, irritated, angry. He wants to end the conversation.

TOM
We're strangers. Right? Strangers who've spent a few hours in the cold together. I can't hold onto the people I know, the places I know, the things I do, the things that matter to me. My life is coming apart and scattering all over the city. I'm not putting it back together again. Not at age thirty. Not with people I'm never going to see again.

He puts in his earbuds.

TOM
It's ten below zero, your buddy got his head busted, Asa got kicked in the face, we watched a perfectly appalling drama starring a derelict, and I trashed a car. I don't want to see what's gonna happen next. I've had enough. Good night.

He zips the bag over his head.

CU. LESLIE

She's disappointed. She's hurt. She looks at Asa.

CU. ASA

He shrugs. He doesn't have any answers.

INT. DOUGHNUT SHOP

Omar is sitting at a table with a cup of coffee and a pile of doughnut holes. He's watching something.

HIS POV

A WOMAN is sitting a table away. She's in profile. She's twenty, not classically beautiful but striking and strong, an interesting face and lots of body. She's wearing thick, wool men's pants, thermal boots, and wool socks over her cuffs. A long, heavy, gray, Russian military coat is spread across the back of the chair. A fur-lined nylon cap pushed back on her head, reveals sweat-wet bangs and delicate curls at her temples. An open, black nylon, down-filled vest over a silk thermal top. The silk is so sheer and tight that her pierces and a tattoo -- the words DARLING BUDS OF MAY under an apple blossom -- are visible.

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CU. OMAR

He's so engrossed with the Woman that he's not paying attention to how many doughnut holes he has in his mouth. His cheeks are round and tight.

CU. WOMAN

She takes a careful sip of an extremely hot cup of coffee. She looks out of the corner of her eye. She knows she's being watched. She sets the cup down and leans back.

CU. OMAR

Still chewing, still staring.

HIS POV

The Woman suddenly turns to him.

CU. OMAR

He freezes.

CU. WOMAN

She stares at him.

HER POV

Omar is still frozen, bent-over, shoulders hunched.

CU. WOMAN

She rises from her seat.

INT. DOUGHNUT SHOP. UNDER THE TABLE

Omar's legs are wiggling nervously. The Woman's feet slide under the table.

CU. OMAR

He's in terror.

CU. WOMAN

She leans forward, clutching the coffee in both hands. She sips, keeping her eyes on Omar without pause.

CU. OMAR

He chews. Once.

ECU. COFFEE CUP

Omar's wiggling is vibrating the table, ripples in the coffee attesting to it.

CU. WOMAN

She removes one hand from the coffee and cocks her shoulder as she reaches under the table.

INT. DOUGHNUT SHOP. UNDER THE TABLE

The Woman's hand reaches under the table and grabs Omar's bouncing knee. She holds it down until it stops moving. She does the same for the other.

CU. WOMAN

She returns her hand to her coffee cup and takes another sip. Never taking her eyes off Omar.

CU. OMAR

He's worse with the legs not moving. His jaws are clenched.

CU. WOMAN

She draws the cup away from her lips and finally speaks.

WOMAN
How old are you?

CU. OMAR

He stares for a long moment then quickly chews. It's no good. He speaks anyway.

OMAR
Winnetka.

CU. WOMAN

She holds her stare.

CU. OMAR

He holds up his finger, signaling her to wait as he chews quickly again for a moment. He then corrects himself.

OMAR
Seventeen.
(pause, chews, swallows)
Why?

CU. WOMAN

She takes another sip of coffee.

CU. OMAR

He stares.

CU. WOMAN

No reaction.

WOMAN
What are you doing here in the middle of the night, in the middle of the winter?

CU. OMAR

He thinks for a moment.

OMAR
I'm waiting for a cab.

CU. WOMAN

No reaction.

CU. OMAR

He swallows hard.

CU. WOMAN

She nods slowly.

WOMAN
Didn't find what you were looking for?

CU. OMAR

Puzzled.

OMAR
Excuse me?

CU. WOMAN

A cruel grin. She rises.

WOMAN
Unless you were looking for doughnuts.

INT. DOUGHNUT SHOP

The Woman walks back to her table and puts on her coat. She pushes out her chest as she tucks in the back of her silks. She wraps a scarf around her neck. She exits.

CU. OMAR

He sinks in his seat. He's baffled. He looks to the Owner/Operator.

OMAR
Was she hitting on me?

CU. OWNER/OPERATOR

He laughs softly. He returns to his paper.

EXT. CLUB

Asa and Leslie are sitting on the camp mattress, in front of the grill, now glowing hot with construction trims. Tom is sleeping. The portable PLAYS MUSIC SOFTLY.

LESLIE
I hate four o'clock in the morning.

ASA
I don't have a watch. I was worried it might get stolen off me so I didn't bring it.

LESLIE
I don't need a watch to know what time it is. This feels like four.

ASA
(genuinely inquisitive)
How does four feel?

LESLIE
Lonely.

ASA
(after a pause)
How old are you, really?

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LESLIE
Fifteen. I was born New Year's Day 1982.

ASA
I was born in May.

LESLIE
(with a sad smile)
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May, and summer's lease hath all too short a date.
(pause)
That's from a poem.
(pause)
At my grandmother's house in the bedroom I used to sleep in, it was part of the wallpaper, along the top.
I still remember it. I probably always will.
(pause)
Do me a big favor. Don't feel sorry for me. I don't need anything and I don't want anything.
(pause)
My life doesn't suck.

ASA
I didn't say it did.

LESLIE
Twenty years from now, I might be up in your neighborhood, married to some guy, have kids and a house, and look like I went to college and you could meet me and not ever know that I was me.

CU. ASA

He cracks a thin smile.

EXT. CLUB. LESLIE

Leslie in profile.

LESLIE
I could go in some other direction and be an actor or a painter or a farmer, you know? And I don't have any idea who I'm going to be but I'm totally convinced, that whatever it is, it'll be because I made the choice. Not friends or parents or circumstances.

CU. ASA

He draws the blanket around his shoulders. He's cold.

ASA
Why did you leave home? If it's okay that I ask that.

EXT. CLUB. STREET

Leslie thinks for a moment.

LESLIE
It isn't legal for someone my age to be responsible for their life. It's legal to have someone responsible for you who kicks your ass, ignores you, degrades you, plays with your head, uses you, lies to you, drops you when you need help, makes up a medical term for your anguish and tries to extinguish it with Ritalin and when it fails, sends you off like dirty laundry so you can spend your adult life sorting through a tangle of bad memories.

EXT. CLUB. ASA

He looks into the grill, uses it to avoid looking at her.

EXT. CLUB. LESLIE. WIDE

Leslie slides out from under the blanket.

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LESLIE
For my money, that's not how it should go. I'm' not going to go to war with parents and teachers and cops. I couldn't win. They couldn't win. If somebody wants to go to hell, they'll go to hell. The only way I could win was to go to hell and that's not, finally, what I decided I wanted. So I fled.

She leans forward, into the warmth and light of the fire.

LESLIE
I hurt no one, I'm not a parasite. I degrade nothing. I demand nothing. I don't piss in people's doorways. I use johns and if they're not public, I always buy something at the place. I don't steal. If something's lost and it isn't going to be found or it doesn't need to be found, I'll take it. I'm not crazy. I'm not dirty. I wash every part of me every day. I brush my teeth. I put on my pajamas, under all this, I say my prayers. As you heard.
(pause)
I'm joyful because I'm free and I'm free because I can deal with myself, my surroundings, and my Fate.

CU. ASA

He rests his chin on his knees.

ASA
And what is your Fate?

CU. LESLIE

She sits forward.

LESLIE
To a live a long, long time, leave a lot of happy kids, and die clean.

CU. ASA

He stares into the fire. He nods slowly. She's right.

EXT. CLUB. LESLIE

She leans back, out of the light.

LESLIE
What's your Fate?

CU. ASA

A bitter, embarrassed laugh.

ASA
Four years at Princeton, two at Harvard Law. Pass my bar exam on the first try. Join a firm and become a partner by age 30. Do a hundred and fifty different girls. Marry the first one I can't dominate. Live in an apartment in the city until we have our three kids. Then buy a big house in the suburbs. Play golf on Saturdays. Take Christmas break in St. Kitts. Spring break in Jackson Hole. Summer vacation in the South of France. Coach soccer. Sit on half a dozen charitable boards. Lose interest in my wife at 40. Cheat on her. Divorce her. Remarry, start another family. Die intestate at age 58 of a massive heart attack on a corporate jet and spend eternity in a crypt next to my grandfather.

CU. LESLIE

A broad grin.

LESLIE
Take off your hat. Unzip that suit.

CU. ASA

Puzzled. But he pulls the hat off, let his damp hair and full face show.

ASA

Why?

CU. LESLIE

OVER LESLIE TO ASA

He unzips his suit to mid-chest. A wall of fire rises, obscuring him. She unzips her jacket. She removes her hood.

CU. ASA

He looks up.

HIS POV

Flame.

CU. LESLIE'S NECK

She unwinds the scarves.

CU. LESLIE'S POCKET

She slips her glasses into her outside jacket pocket.

EXT..CLUB, SIDEWALK. CU. JACKET

Her jacket and it's contents slide INTO FRAME.

CU. GRILL LID

Leslie's bare hand grabs the lid.

CU. FLAMES

The lid DROPS INTO FRAME, smothers the flames, and reveals Asa. He's startled. He looks ahead, trying to figure out what he's seeing, what's going on.

HIS POV

Leslie's head is bowed. She's still wearing her yellow knit cap. Instead of the jacket, she's wearing an old, blue, angora sweater over her pajamas. Her mittens are gone. She pulls off her cap. The wind whips her short, black hair. She looks up. She's very much fifteen, very beautiful, soft, innocent features, baby smooth skin. Confident, noble, healthy, strong. A face that doesn't match the talk. A face that looks like it belongs anywhere but here.

EXT. CLUB. TOM'S CHAISE

CAMERA PUSHES IN on Tom's sleeping bag, to the upper corner and a set of eyes peering out.

CU. LESLIE

She grins.

LESLIE
You should get yourself a big, orange chair and get the hell out of Winnetka.

CU. ASA

He smiles. He nods.

HIS POV

Leslie lifts the lids on the grill. The flames rise and obliterate her.

EXT. CLUB. MATTRESS

Leslie walks around to the other side of the grill.

CU. ASA

Looking up at Leslie, still holding his smile. Something catches his eye. He turns...

HIS POV

The street. A flash of silver sailing down the street.

EXT. STREET.

The metallic blanket, caught in the wind, skips down the middle of the deserted street.

CU. ASA

He looks ahead. A look of fear.

HIS POV

Mr. 66 is standing in the street. His shirt is off. He's weak, his knees are trembling.

CU. LESLIE

She's worried. She rises.

LESLIE
Oh, God...

EXT. STREET

Mr. 66 is holding his shirt at his side, expelling plumes of steaming breath at irregular intervals. The SOUND OF A SIREN COMES UP. FAINT AND DISTANT BUT STEADILY APPROACHING. He slumps to his knees.

CU. MR. 66

Eyes open, looking ahead.

HIS POV

Leslie approaches slowly. The moon is above her, the sign poles and street lamps silhouetting the buildings across the street. The cold, blue darkness begins, slowly, to warm and lighten. Leslie's hood and scarves become sun-streaked blonde hair. The moon begins to glow a fiery yellow. The buildings turn from blue black to rusty red, from buildings to foothills and mountains. Leslie's face lengthens, loses it's youth, her eyes turn blue. The poles and lamps become saguaro. The sky brightens to a deep blue. Leslie's lips, her nose, her cheekbones, eyebrows, chin all change and she's 21. The moon is the sun, the winter is the spring, the street is the desert and '96 is '66.

CU. MR. 66

He smiles.

HIS POV

His lover leans down to kiss him. The necklace with three turquoise beads slips out of her shirt and swings in and out of her tanned cleavage. Her blonde hair spills INTO FRAME.

ECU. LOVER'S EYE

Crystal blue sparkles and a speck of a black pupil.

ECU. MR. 66'S EYE

Clear, translucent, mahogany dominated by a massive black pupil.

ECU. LOVER'S EYE

Her pupil expands.

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ECU. MR. 66'S EYE

His pupil contracts.

ECU. LOVER'S EYE

The pupil expands to FILL THE FRAME.

ECU. MR. 66'S EYE

The pupil shrinks to a speck.

EXT. STREET

Leslie stands before Mr. 66. He's holding her around the waist, his head resting against her belly.

CU. MR. 66'S HAND

Clutching her skirt.

CU. MR. 66'S BACK

Leslie's bare hand gently squeezes a tattooed shoulder blade. Rat Fink.

EXT. STREET

Leslie kneels and lays Mr. 66 across her knee. His right arm grasps his belly, his left arm is lifeless, extended over the pavement.

CU. MR. 66

Smiling, peaceful, innocent.

CU. LESLIE

She weeps softly.

CU. LESLIE AND MR. 66

Mr. 66 expels his last breath. It curls up and over Leslie's shoulder.

EXT. SKY

The plume rises INTO FRAME, spreads, and dissolves.

CU. LESLIE

She puts the cap end of a felt-tip pen in her mouth and pulls it off.

CU. MR. 66'S HAND

Leslie draws on the back of his hand. The symbols -- LIFE/DEATH/INFINITY.

EXT. STREET

Leslie lets the pen fall as she folds 66's limp body into her arms. A Range Rover passes THROUGH FOREGROUND. The SIRENS GROW LOUDER.

EXT. STREET

From ABOVE. Leslie holds 66.

EXT. CLUB

Tom and Asa stand at the curb, looking across at Leslie.

CU. TOM

The faintest of smiles.

CU. ASA

He crosses himself.

CU. CLUB MARQUEE

Blue cop lights shine across the sign.

CU. LESLIE

She stands still, police lights flickering across her damp cheeks and tired, swollen eyes.

EXT. STREET. PADDY WAGON

A body bag lays on the floor of the wagon. The doors close. The wagon pulls away.

EXT. CLUB

Leslie's on the curb. Tom's behind her and to the side. Asa is against the building.

CU. TOM

The wind is whipping his hair. He's squinting against the cold.

HIS POV

The Cop we saw earlier approaches him.

COP
Sorry you had to go through that.

CU. LESLIE

She looks to the side.

HER POV

The Cop and Tom.

COP
(looking to Leslie)
Sorry, ma'am.
(to Tom)
He was a veteran. Did you know that?

Tom nods.

COP
I 's pitiful. But that's where we are now.

CU. LESLIE

She looks at him with a sad smile.

EXT. STREET. TOM AND THE COP

The Cop leans in a little closer.

COP
We got a call a couple hours ago. Big shot. Said his car got damaged. You know what he was talking about?

TOM
Yeah.

COP
You know about a busted windshield?

TOM
Yeah.

COP
Car phone?

TOM
Yes.

COP
Torn out of a Lexus?

TOM
Yes.

COP
You know the guy?

TOM
Not formally.

COP
He owns a lot of property.

TOM
That's what he said.

COP
So let me ask you again. Did you see anything?

TOM
(after a long pause)
I saw everything. I did it. He got aggressive with Leslie. Threw the college kid down on the pavement. Kicked Asa in the face. I lost my temper.

COP
The boy's underage?

TOM
(pause)
Yes.

COP
You got three underage?

TOM
Two. One left.

COP
He assaulted a minor?

TOM
Two.

COP
Your wife's a minor?

TOM
She's not my wife.

COP
(laughs)
That was a beauty. Jesus Christ, I don't get many whoppers that size.

TOM
I'm sorry.

COP
It's all right. You get an A for effort. Listen, let me ask you again about the windshield and the car phone. You didn't see anything?

Tom's puzzled.

COP
It's cold, you're all bundled-up. You're not paying a lot of attention. Maybe you were sleeping.

TOM
(catching on)
Yeah.

COP
The guy who did it must have split.

TOM
I think he did.

COP
All right. That's all I needed to know. Justice prevails.
(pause)
For a change.

TOM
Thank you.

COP
The guy's a fuckin' whiner. His father owns about five square blocks of this neighborhood. Tough shit, huh?

TOM
Tough shit.

COP
I'll call him back and ask him about kicking minors. That should do the trick. You gonna stick it out?

TOM
I think so.

The Cop crosses to Leslie's chair. He takes College Boy by the arm.

COP
Let's go, frat boy.

He lifts College Boy out of the chair and slings his arm around his neck.

COP
Your honey's waiting for you down at the station house.

He walks College Boy to the squad car. His Partner opens the rear door. The Cop puts College in the backseat. He tips his hat to Leslie.

COP
Night, ma'am. Good luck with the baby.

He laughs.

CU. LESLIE

An amused smile.

LESLIE
I'll send you a picture.

CU. COP

A wink.

EXT. CLUB. WIDE

The squad car pulls away. Tom stands at the curb. Leslie returns to her chair. Asa lays down on the mattress and covers himself with his silver blanket.

CU. TOM

Looking down the street. The life drains out of his face.

HIS POV

The squad car turns at the corner, leaving the street empty.

CU. TOM

He fumbles for a cigarette as his eyes well-up with tears.

TOM
(under his breath)
Shit...

CU. LESLIE

She watches Tom.

LESLIE
Tom?

HER POV

Tom is at the curb, his back to CAMERA. He doesn't respond.

CU. TOM

He tries to light the cigarette. He's trembling. The wind is extinguishing his lighter flame.

CU. ASA

He sits up on his elbows. He looks at Tom.

CU. TOM

He's holding back tears. He's embarrassed. He's trying desperately not to break-down. He can't get the cigarette lit. He takes it out of his mouth. He puts his hands on his hips and bows his head as he waits for the inexplicable grief to pass. Without nicotine.

CU. LESLIE

She begins to smile.

HER POV

Tom lifts his head. He takes a deep, calming breath.

CU. ASA

He's watching Leslie. He smiles.

CU. TOM

He looks back at Asa and Leslie. A sad, defeated, but honest look.

CU. LESLIE

A warm smile.

CU. ASA

He lays back and pulls the silver blanket over his head.

CU. TOM

He looks up...

HIS POV

The marquee. The moon.

EXT. CLUB. WIDE

Tom returns to the chaise. Leslie pulls her arms inside her coat and tucks into the chair. Tom zips himself into his sleeping bag. He lays back. After a long beat the chaise collapses.

EXT. STREET. MORNING

Grim, gray light.

EXT. CLUB

Tom's in his bag. Asa's under the metallic blanket. Leslie's in her chair. A TEENAGE BOY is sitting in line ahead of Tom. ANOTHER is between Tom and Leslie. A COUPLE in their twenties is between Leslie and Asa. The line continues beyond Asa.

EXT. STREET

A long line has formed down the block.

EXT. CLUB. TICKET WINDOW

A light goes on. A WOMAN enters the booth and removes the cover from the opening. She's open for business.

WOMAN
Hi.

HER POV

Tom's at the window, refreshed, smiling.

TOM
Can you let me have four?

CU. WOMAN

She nods cheerfully and counts out the ten tickets.

CU. TOM

He takes the tickets.

TOM
Thanks.

He walks away. A TEENAGE BOY steps up the window.

KID
Four, please.

CU. WOMAN

She shakes her head.

WOMAN
Limit's two.

CU. KID

Puzzled.

KID
You gave the other guy four.

CU. WOMAN

She nods.

WOMAN
He's in the band.

EXT. STREET

Asa walks down the line with his two tickets. He stops and hands one of the tickets to a BOY waiting in line. He continues down the street.

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EXT. STREET. CORNER

Asa reaches the corner. He looks back.

HIS POV

Leslie crosses the street, pushing her chair. She waves her two tickets.

CU. ASA

He smiles. He waves his ticket. He turns and crosses the street.

EXT. KANE COUNTY. RURAL ROAD

Frozen corn fields, a two-lane highway, and a battered taxi cab.

INT. CAB

Omar is sleeping on the backseat. A hapless, confused DRIVER is puzzling over a map. MUSIC COMES UP.

INT. CLUB. WIDE

An auditorium absent the seats on the first level, a balcony, large stage with decorative elements. There is a charm to it's decline, a comfortable fall from grace, a friendly, detailed interior that has lost it's pretense but maintains it's stateliness. A band is PLAYING to a capacity, all-ages crowd. Locals, purists, devotees. The university types are absent. The atmosphere is congenial.

INT. CLUB. STAGE

Five members of the six piece are facing the crowd, the bass player is turned away. CAMERA PUSHES IN on the stage, past the singer, past a guitarist, to the bass player. He turns. It's Tom.

INT. CLUB. MAIN FLOOR

CAMERA MOVES THROUGH the transfixed faces to Asa, standing unaccompanied in the crowd. He stands out a bit in his polo shirt. He's smiling with sublime satisfaction. CAMERA BOOMS UP from Asa to the balcony above. People line the iron railing, and look down on the band. CAMERA pushes in on Leslie. She's wearing Mr. 66's turquoise bead necklace.

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HER POV

The stage, the band, the main floor. IN SLOW DISSOLVE the audience is replaced by smooth, high-comp professionals enjoying cigars, conversation, and a thousand varieties of beer in the handsome, expensive, and well regarded restaurant that has replaced the Club. THE MUSIC CONTINUES.

FADE.

END